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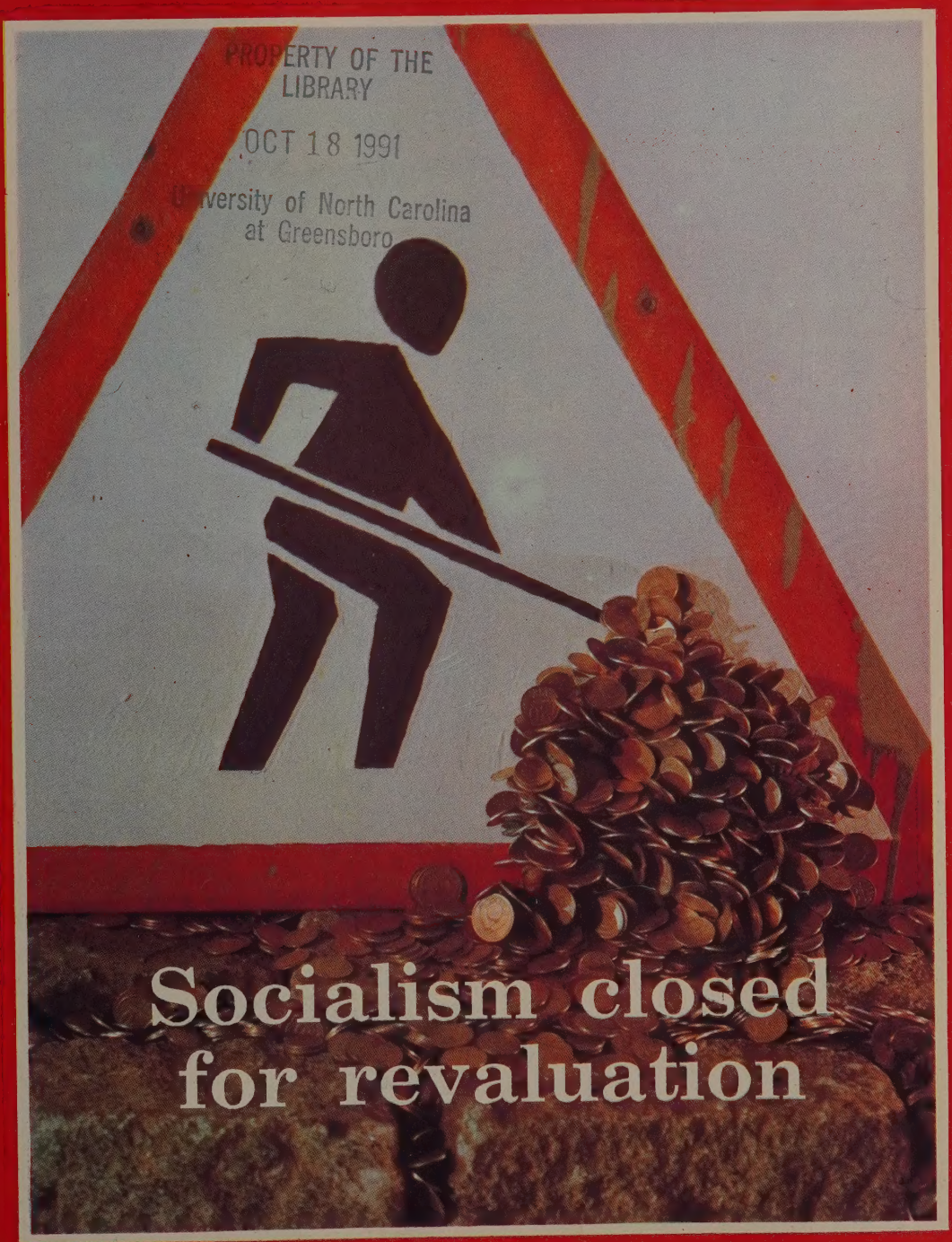

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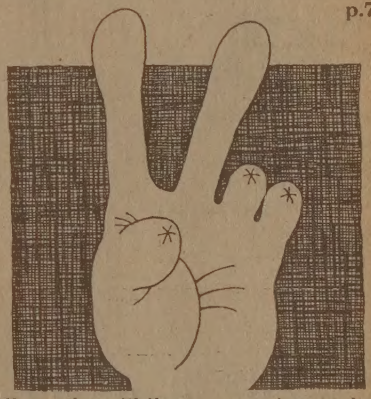

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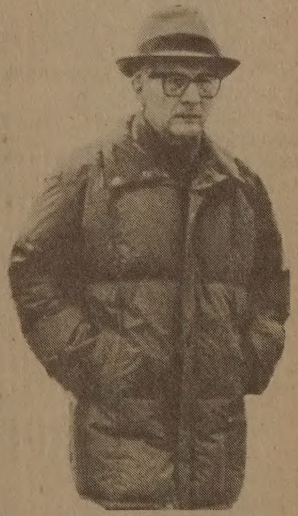

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Cover by Victor Brel

Our address: Pushkin Square, Moscow, GSP, 103782, USSR. Telephones: 229-88-72, 209-07-67

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Founders: *New Times* journalists

Published in Russian, English, German, and Italian

● Printed by Moskovskaya Pravda Press. Telex: 411164a newt SU 411164b newt SU
Telefax: 200-42-23, 200-41-92, Advertising Department: 209-92-82

© New Times

From our mailbag

■ I am writing to you apropos of the article by M. Shakina, entitled "Something has happened to perestroika" (No. 9/91). Can't you see what is going on? You are bringing up political figures – Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Pavlov, etc. But all of them are decent people, not at all some villains. Only they have different tasks. Because of his position, Gorbachev must look after the interests of the entire Union, whereas Yeltsin and the parliaments of all republics must take care of their own republics. And this can lead to the disintegration of the state. Each decent state must have only one parliament. And we have 16 parliaments. It is like assigning 16 captains to one ship. Anyone in Yeltsin's place must strive for the independence of the republic – that is to break down the Union. Anyone in Gorbachev's position must struggle for the preservation of the Union. Therefore I think that there is no need in republican parliaments and presidents. For all their decisions must repeat the decisions of the central authorities – otherwise there will be a total confusion. In the past such silly situation was not evident because the semblance of democracy existed only for the purpose of covering the dictatorship.

All republics should be liquidated, their nationalism should not be over-emphasized and the country should be divided into regions or provinces on the basis of territorial and economic considerations. This is how things were before the revolution in this country and how they are nowadays in the United States and other countries. As long as there exist republics, there will exist an alternative: either again a dictatorship or the breaking down of the Union into separate states. Just think how much blood and suffering will be caused by such a division of the state!

The Gorbachev administration is the most humane and democratic administration in the entire history of this country. And he is accused of having dictatorial manners! It is simply a petty swindle.

N. Bushuev
Poltava Region, USSR

■ Blockade, the use of military force, the state of emergency and the liquidation of local parliaments will lead only to the preservation of the old Union and will mean the end of perestroika. The best proof of this are the events in Nagorny Karabakh. Kind people! It is time for you to understand that Nagorny Karabakh is a proving

Some people urge us to go to the right, others to go to the left. And we shall sit down and watch TV

■ When journalists complain about insufficient freedom / as does G. Ariyevich in the article "Free press under fire" (No. 4/91), I have a feeling of being done out of my share: they don't take the reader into consideration. In their bitter arguments with editors and state bodies journalists forget who they write for. And as a reader, I am horrified as I see that the rein is about to become looser and I shall be tired out with much talk and cries and trampled down by the journalists' unbridled horses.

The independent press (including *New Times*) is as like as two peas: it mainly writes about negative things and attacks the CPSU, the centre, the army and the President. And the official newspapers and magazines began to acquire their own individual traits. It is the official publications that are sold out in our kiosks in the first place, and the independent press accumulates. I think that the readers have simply got tired of the endless marathon along the road of glasnost. Especially as there is indeed no objectivity.

A lot has been written about the Vilnius events. But why the independent press has not written a word about the violation of human rights in the Baltic republics? Having been assigned after the graduation from the institute to Daugavpils and after living there for 38 years, my school-fellow had to leave for Russia: she is Russian and her husband is Polish, hence they are second-rate people. Unbiased objectivity is the journalistic ideal, says Ariyevich. But there exists also the responsibility of the journalist that requires him to exercise caution in the evaluation of events. One can only lose his voice if he keeps on shouting. And although we are accused of being a backward and sleepy province, we nevertheless are got used to responding to a calm and convincing voice, and not to a shout. And this is exactly the sin of the democratic press.

I think that journalists should know the psychology of those for whom they work. A man cannot constantly live in a nightmare. And the television did the right thing when it cleared the deck for entertainment programmes. The programme *The Wonderfield* is watched by entire families and is then discussed for a long time. Of course, one can reproach us with narrow-mindedness and bad taste, but still we watch it with pleasure. We are tired of the nightmare, we are tired of uncertainty: where are we going, where shall we arrive. Some people urge us to go to the right, others to the left, and we are standing still. We would sit in front of the TV set and would watch *The Wonderfield, The Slave Isaura* and the movie-star Zhionov playing the role of the fixed-post spy.

Journalists are worried that we are being distracted from the events that are taking place in this country. I cannot speak on behalf of the people, but on my own behalf, on behalf of my relatives, friends and most of my colleagues I can tell you this: we have already made our choice – it is in favour of socialism and the union. We do not regard ourselves as conservatives, because we are in favour of the market. At the same time we are convinced: we shall be saved by culture, orderliness, discipline and order. All this is not an obstacle to freedom and a true democracy, but rather the conditions for their realization.

Strange as it may seem, but it is the independent press that has helped us to determine our choice.

D. Miller
Engels, USSR

The sexologists of this country are not to be relied upon

The policy is determined not by a person, but by the post he occupies

Nagorny Karabakh as a proving ground

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

ground for the working-through of methods of suppression of people. Tomorrow we can find ourselves in the place of those who live there today. The army in Nagorny Karabakh is a toy in the hands of the Party and bureaucratic apparatus. And generals like Safonov and Makashov are always easy to find. The tension in Moscow is being fanned up on purpose in order to introduce the presidential rule and abolish the legitimate power as it has happened in Karabakh. We must not be deceived: can't we understand who, where and how pits us against each other?

A. Sarkisyan,
regular army officer
Armenia, USSR

■ I am grateful to the author of the article "Vlasov and Vlasovites" (No. 44, 90) for giving an objective assessment. For in this country they either eulogize someone to the extreme or make out of him the vilest man there is.

I fought in the war and I am convinced that General Vlasov is one of the brilliant military commanders who distinguished himself during the defence of Moscow. It is not his fault that the 2nd shock army suffered a defeat – he took command of it when its fate had been already sealed. One can have his own opinion about Vlasov's surrender. But his name was used for the purpose of propaganda and as an excuse for repressions against those who were taken prisoners. The general and his fellow fighters chose their own – thorny, dangerous and deadly – path of struggle for Russia. To some extent their deeds have something in common with our aspirations of today. So it may be makes sense to think about removing from Vlasov and true Vlasovites the brand of traitors of the country?

E. Morozov
Volgograd Region, USSR

■ Today some people try to excuse Vlasov, arguing that he was fighting for a free Russia. They say: "One doesn't know what is worse – fascism or Stalinism." Partly this is true. And yet, can one find any excuse for betrayal? Vlasov went over to the fascists. No matter in the name of what idea he fought against his own people – it is all the same the treason and meanness.

To excuse Vlasov by citing his "patriotic" ideas means to acknowledge as true the thesis "the goal justifies the means," hence justify fascism.

Ivan Kulikov,
Vladimir, USSR

Don't shoot at the courageous hunter

■ Iam writing to you apropos of the article by Prof. Igor Kon, entitled "Sex: we do have it in the USSR" (No. 2/91).

On more than one occasion our press featured articles the authors of which savoured the incident that had happened during one of the television links when a woman representing the USSR said: "We don't have sex in this country!" She was pounced upon from all sides. Even the well-known professor sexologist Igor Kon could not resist the temptation once again to make a laughing–stock of the poor woman. I think that one cannot fight for the culture of sex and begin with the humiliation of the woman even if, from the point of view of sexologist, she said an absurdity.

How did our fighters for sexual culture behave themselves in the situation of the raging obscenity? It is simply amazing: when robust lanky fellows began to sell pseudomedical literature and scabrous pictures in the underground crossings they suddenly lost the gift of speech. And they found it only after the creation of the State Commission for Protection of Public Morals! Although one would expect them to welcome its creation since they have demonstrated their complete helplessness in the struggle with this evil, that was not the case!

Why did competent sexologists keep silent when the press advertised base expositions? Things went so far that at some point a desperate visitor from Nizhni Novgorod (the latter-day Kozma Minin who rushed to save Russia) began to smash glass cases at the exhibition in the Cheriomushki District to attract attention to the problem. In this connection the newspaper *Moskovskaya Pravda* quipped: "Has he become overexcited?" But if the exhibition made the visitors excited, its exhibits fell under the definition of pornography given in the much respected *Encyclopaedia Britannica:* "Pornography, the representation of erotic behavior, as in books, pictures or films, intended to cause sexual excitement."

It doesn't take much to make a laughing-stock of the participant in the television link by exposing her to shame. It is more difficult to manage the current of porno-dirt. And did the sexologists of this country attempt to stop it?

Now the valiant fighters for the culture have the new enemy belonging to those with whom one can fight fearlessly: the state commission. Here Igor Kon is playing a skeptical tune: he shakes his head and complains that the erotic question is becoming the "subject of the most cynical political game." There is an evident contradiction in his reasoning. The professor writes that we should clean our streets from porno-dirt. Who then is going to clean them? Kon proposes the social control. But that sounds too vague and time is running out. The Soviet Union is a signatory to the 1923 Geneva Convention on combating pornography. Hence the creation of the commission is not at odds with the norms of international law. Why then does our press, which is so fond of writing about different international arrangements, keep silent about this convention?

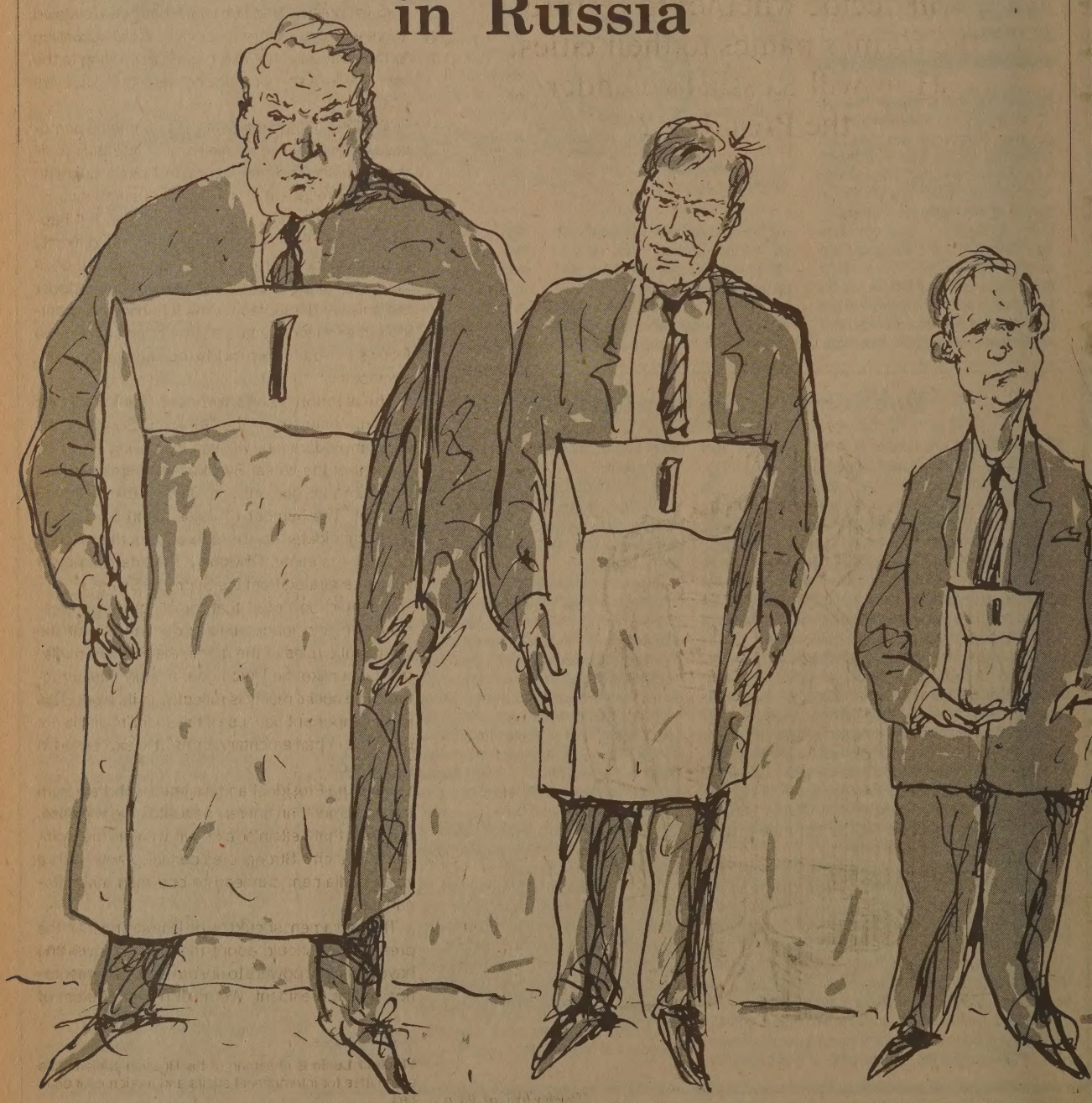
I am not at all against Eros, but at the same time I have no illusions regarding the world we live in. In this world people often have to protect their souls (and sometimes their bodies as well) from crude intrusions. Grey Wolves inhabit this world too. Today the Little Red Riding Hood can gather flowers and lope stark naked over a clearing only under the protection of the Courageous Hunter. So, don't shoot at him.

Sergei Makin
Moscow, USSR

***Compiled by* Tatiana Chernova**

POLITICAL LIFE

There is no impeachment in Russia



On June 12 Russia and Tatarstan will elect their presidents, and Moscow and Leningrad their mayors. The people of Leningrad and Sverdlovsk will decide whether to restore the former names to their cities. How will Russia live under the President?

Drawing by Igor Shein

Vladimir Lukin

Half-democratic changes on a Union scale and changes in the republics, from fully democratic to authoritarian, have created a vacuum of power. This is not surprising, because democracy has been established for decades in the world. Besides, in our country it is being introduced to a certain extent in a chaotic and illogical way. Moreover, we have a rather peculiar political tradition which has been revealed in present-day reality. In our view, living according to the truth does not mean living according to the law. It can also been added here that laws are vague.

The idea of the presidency is to combine democracy with effective administration and thus to fill the vacuum. The presidency in Russia ought to create a precedent in our unprecedented history, namely, democratic presidential power. If it happens, we shall be able gradually and with difficulty to upgrade democracy on a Union level. If it does not happen, the country will fall in disunity. Under the guise of democracy some republics are creating rather queer structures already today. If Russia follows this path, there will be no democratic prospect for it.

The election results, forecast. I think that Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, will win by polling 53 to 57 percent of the votes. Ryzhkov will come second, with 23 to 26 percent and Bakatin third, with 13 percent. The number of votes taken by each of these candidates can be different, but the essence remains the same. Obviously, presidential power will be separated from the Supreme Soviet.

It should be noted that for all its non-professionalism and inadequate understanding of the democratic rules of the game, the Russian parliament is, unlike the Union one, a really vital structure. The social reality is reflected in its work. This is very important because if the social reality is not reflected in parliamentary forms, it is expressed in ochlocracy.

But if the President and his team withdraw from the parliament, an entirely new situation will arise. Is it likely that Yeltsin's "exit" will weaken the legislative branch? Strong presidential power with a weak parliament can lead to one-man authoritarian rule.

The parliament should be no less strong than the president. It should adopt thought-out laws and have sufficient powers to ensure their implementation by the president. We must have a system of

---

Vladimir Lukin is chairman of the Russian parliament's committee for international affairs and foreign economic ties.

checks and balances which has taken shape, for instance, in the United States.

Such a system is also necessary for another reason. In our country, in the present political situation there is a great danger that presidential power will greatly depend on the personality, on whether we shall have a "good" or "bad" president. Personalism, I would even say, the tsarist tradition, has not faded out from our politics. It has merely acquired new forms and perhaps it has even strengthened. In the United States or in France, democracy is also personified to a considerable extent, but within the checks and balances system. As soon as the leader encroaches on the functions of other authorities, transcends some limits, legal procedures up to impeachment come into effect, and the leader either retreats or quits the political scene.

A strong parliament. How to create it? Some people think that after the June 12 presidential election the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet should be dissolved and new parliamentary elections appointed. I do not think it would be expedient to do that, and not only because voters may not go to the polls. There is the following tendency in our country: we build something, watch for some time how it works and, seeing that it does not fully satisfy us, destroy the structure and build a new one. The parliament and the Congress of People's Deputies have a term of office set in the Constitution. New elections can be announced after we quietly draw up and adopt a new Constitution.

The task of a strong parliament is to help the President to be strong and democratic. It presupposes the combination of constructive cooperation and constructive opposition. In Russia, it unfortunately happens worse than anywhere else. We either join our hands or hit at one another.

The Supreme Soviet should try to keep its apparatus, because the President may have a strong temptation to place it, first of all experts, under his control. It would be a serious mistake leading to undesirable consequences. For instance, the President draws up his budget proposals and submits them to the parliament. Deprived of its experts, the parliament will be unable to react to them quickly rather than with useless criticism. In 1974 the US Congress set up a special budget office in addition to the President's office so that alternative budget projects could compete with presidential ones in the interests of taxpayers.

Incidentally, the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation has made a considerable progress during a year of its work. However, the spending of budget allocations is out of its control. The parliament must have strict control over public spending, for otherwise it is not a parliament. The emphasis should be laid on work in the standing committees and commissions. To all appearance, the role of the Presidium will decline and it will only be correct. The chambers must work to the full effect within the sphere of their competence. When their terms of reference intersect and a conflict breaks out, conciliation commissions are formed. In the United States, the chambers meet together once a year to hear the President's message, whereas the chambers of the Russian parliament often hold joint sessions.

The struggle between factions. Will it prevent the creation of a strong parliament and lead its work to a dead end? The latest Congress of People's Deputies seemed highly promising to me. It saw the crystallization of a broad tendency – it can't be called a coalition – towards a constructive solution of problems. The political trends at the Congress still have great distinctions, but thanks to this tendency a "field of agreement" has become apparent. I would formulate the basic framework of agreement in this way: against the break-up of the country, for effective Russian power, for a constructive exercise of Russian sovereignty, for cooperation in the Union. This tendency exists and, given reasonable leadership, it will only grow stronger.

The Constitutional Court is a third pillar of democracy. A law on this court must be passed by the next Congress of People's Deputies at which the President will be sworn into office. The Congress must also approve the composition of the Constitutional Court and the new leadership of the Supreme Soviet.

The Constitutional Court is a body which in the event of disagreement between the parliament and the President takes a decision on the constitutionality of their actions. It is not good that such a court has not been established yet. It would be desirable for it to have some experience by the time the President is sworn into office. But there is also a positive moment. Candidates for the Constitutional Court must be proposed by the chairman of the Supreme Soviet. When Yeltsin did that, he was already a presidential candidate. Formally, it is perhaps even better that at the next Congress of People's Deputies the Constitutional Court will be formed by a less interested authority.

The time after the election of the President will be a decisive period for Russia in many respects. It will be the time of creating precedents, that is, example for the future life of the state. Even in the United States, which system we are inclined to follow, presidential power is based half on law and half on precedents. That is why the relationship between the President, the parliament and the Constitutional Court will greatly determine the future political life of Russia. If we manage to find reasonable compromises full of common sense and sense of proportion, we shall be able to make the Russian and Union parliaments work and shall overcome the troubled time in proper manner.

If my forecast on the outcome of the election proves correct, Russia will have an energetic and ambitious president. He and his team will most likely work out a sort of the American "100 days" programme. True, this did not happen on a Union level. The President of the USSR and his Cabinet of ministers had a rather slow start... Yeltsin's programme will evidently include the following basic problems: an economic reform (a drastic shift towards a market economy), measures for an early delimitation of powers between the Russian Federation and the Union, and serious measures for regulating relations within Russia. The republics of Russia must be granted all rights necessary for their free development but not creating the danger of its disintegration.

* * *

Together with Russian Premier Ivan Silayev, I recently visited the United States where we met with Henry Kissinger. Many people make pessimistic forecasts about the future of Russia, Kissinger told us. However, the present history reminds me of the period after 1905 – a small but very painful defeat in the war with Japan, confusion in the echelons of state power, terrorism and disturbances in the outlying areas of the country. After 1905 everyone wrote Russia off as a power. But several years passed, reforms were carried out, and in 1912 the German general staff reported: if a preventive war is not launched against Russia in the near future, it will become one of the strongest powers in the Euro-Asian region. It can be added that Kissinger is not an optimist. He is a political realist.

The sword of Georgia

A visit to the Georgian leader

Dmitry Leonov,
Chairman of Memorial's human rights commission

Bowing my head, I enter the past. There are things that just cannot be said over the telephone. Nobody would allow you to place a call for the news agency Postfactum or the Moscow Helsinki Group or a prominent Georgian dissident. Every face is vigilant and jokes are told in half whispers. Once again I am underground – an experience I am almost nostalgic about. When I came to Tbilisi, it was as if I returned to the past – there was one significant difference, though – I was the one who was believed to be an agent provocateur.

What is now happening in Georgia is serious, perhaps too serious. Nonetheless I would allow myself to tell a joke:

Zviad Gamsakhurdia's barber attends to his client, muttering: "Dzhaba, Dzhaba" (Dzhaba Ioseliani, Gamsakhurdia's most formidable rival, is now held in custody at the remand prison of the Georgian KGB). "Why are you saying this? Gamsakhurdia asks. "It's more convenient to trim your hair this way," the barber replies, "it bristles at mention of the name."

Tracing history back to the Romans

Pro-democracy forces – new political groups and parties of Georgia are very much different from their counterparts in the Russian Federation. In Georgia, political leaders remind one of medieval princes surrounded by their troops.

The building of socialism in the Soviet Union was an attempt at overstripping capitalism without actually catching up with it. It may sound ironic, but the awareness and social structures of totalitarian Soviet society incorporated – in distorted and misinterpreted form – the values of rationalist bourgeois society oriented to material progress. One such value is "effectiveness of production," which was always recognized as necessary but never really implemented. In Georgia, in any place where the system of imperial party-and-state power starts crumbling, the archaic values creep back into the economic, social and spiritual spheres.

The march of Moldovan volunteers against the self-proclaimed Gagauz Republic, retaliation from Tiraspol, the deployment of the army to separate the opposing sides, crowds of people rushing to the central square of the Gagauz capital of Komrat to answer the summons of a church bell – all this is painfully similar to the historical chronicles, the tribal wars, Titus Livius and his writings about the history of Rome. I named Gagauzia, but I might as well have named other regions which I have visited. In such cases one has to be on the spot because when you are just reading the description of events, you can't sense the presence of the past reborn.

I bow my head and "the sword of Georgia" sparkles over me. The article, entitled "The Sword of Georgia" was published on May 10 in the *Tbilisi Evening* daily and written by someone who proudly called himself "a slave, a servant, a serf, a warrior of Zviad Gamsakhurdia." The author is the minister of culture of Georgia who adorns Gamsakhurdia in no end of glorifying epithets. Together with Kostava, Gamsakhurdia overthrew the power of the Communists. He is the saviour of the nation who had shattered the "whole empire" by publishing a Samizdat publication and organizing the Human Rights Committee. The minister's writing is florid and high-worded. The image of a concrete person with a commonly known life is almost completely dissolved in the glamourous mist surrounding the millennia-old image of a Czar and a High Priest. Gamsakhurdia is described as a martyr whom the enemies had repeatedly tried to crucify, a ruler, a leader; he sacrifices himself in the name of his fatherland, but awakenes "a nation rotting alive"; he raised "the humble, desperate and enslaved Georgia from the grave." Gamsakhurdia's good education is deliberately emphasised ("he is a brilliant translator of Baudelaire is fluent in several languages and a great speaker). The resulting image is that of a High Priest, "a brave warrior", "the sword of fate," "the leader of the Georgian nation"; "given to the world as an extraordinary blessing."

Gamsakhurdia's image of a Chosen Leader enters a sharp and insoluble contradiction with the idea of democratic presidential elections. Can any politician compete with the Chosen One? "No free democrat," the minister wrote, "no other democrat, no human being on the face of the Earth can interfere with God's Providence." Isn't it clear who actually is struggling against the Chosen One? Isn't it clear that "the dark forces of the Kremlin" are only an euphemism standing for the Satan? Meanwhile, many people have only been so willing to assist Providence.

A deputy prefect in the Dedoplistskharsky district was briefing opposition representatives: "You will not have the guts to look the people in the eye. Do you want to go on living in here?"

How to assist Providence

In the town of Kvareli the police prevented people from putting up "the wrong" posters. At the same time three portraits of Gamsakhurdia were hung at one polling station in Sukhumi, violating the Law on Elections which forbids any campaigning on the election day. There was no mention about the candidates' equal right to use the media – this right was simply ignored. A half of the election programmes of the people's deputy of the USSR, Advadze, was barred from the air and no explanation was offered. An explanation was given, however, for a police raid on Advadze's election headquarters conducted with direct participation of leading officers of the republican Ministry of the Interior. The official version was that the headquarters was raided to dislodge "the KGB agents" – in reality though, the "agents" were officers of the Moscow Criminal Investigation Department who worked as body guards during their vacations. Two days before the elections the Georgian Ministry of the Interior attached its own bodyguards to each candidate and they were doing more spying than bodyguarding. On the eve of an election meeting organized by the opposition, people were warned about the threat of armed provocative acts. Many work collectives issued appeals to elect President Gamsakhurdia for another term. In this context, the adoption of the Law on the Protection of Honour and Dignity of the President, stipulating a punishment of up to six years in prison, seemed an extremely timely measure.

The Supreme Soviet was doing its best to assist Divine Providence. The Law on Elections allocated so little time for campaigning that no candidate who did not possess much popularity and organizational structures, that is no candidate but President Gamsakhurdia, stood any chance to win the race.

The Law on Elections itself was changed

Zviad Gamsakhurdia: "If only you knew how many enemies I've got!"

three times: once five days after the adoption and twice during the 12-day presidential campaign. First, the objective was to keep the detained Ioseliani from running. Second, an opportunity was needed to dissolve the Central Election Committee "in case it violated the law" and to entrust the counting of votes to an ad hoc Supreme Soviet commission. Why was this needed at all? Apparently, the deputy chairman of the Central Election Committee who had been elected there from the opposition bloc. Liberty did not inspire much confidence in Gamsakhurdia. Four days before the actual voting, Gamsakhurdia suspended the election law for one day and during that day the campaigning was really wild. However, the fact that the law was suspended became known only on the day after, when the tireless Supreme Soviet adopted a new law with the same name, which contained no mention of the ad hoc committee. The election campaign and the flexible law were intended to bring Georgia back to the painfully familiar times when elections were purely a decorative event. As we can see, it was a difficult but possible task.

The laws of Georgia secured a landslide victory, absolute and stable power for Gamsakhurdia. Gamsakhurdia speaks of monarchy as an acceptable form of statehood for Georgia and the orthodox monarchists love him for that. The Georgians, who are very respectful for dynasties, are attracted by the fact that Gamsakhurdia's father was a classic of Georgian literature. As President, Gamsakhurdia issues decrees and signs laws adopted by the Supreme Soviet. He has the right to send a law for repeat voting, and in case the parliament votes the law down by a two-thirds' majority, the President has the right to submit it to a referendum. The president has the right to abolish any decisions taken by the government, ministries, and other administrative bodies from top to bottom. He has the right to dissolve the Supreme Soviet on his own initiative. He enjoys complete personal immunity and can be removed from office only if three fourths of parliament acknowledge him as a traitor of the Fatherland...

Betrayal of the Fatherland is not only a notion from the criminal code. The High Priest and the martyr, the son of Georgia and simultaneously Georgia's father and saviour, Gamsakhurdia is also, in a sense, the spouse of Georgia. Free from responsibility for violations of the law and the constitution, President of Georgia can be removed only if proved to have been unfaithful to his land – his mother and spouse in the sacred marriage. In Tbilisi I saw what is known there as "Ulan Bator" – a tent camp rigged up by female supporters and followers of Gamsakhurdia. The women are ironically called Mdedrioni (a word derived from the Georgian word meaning the female of an animal and sounding very much like Mkhedrioni, one of the political groups in Georgia). The crowds of the belligerent females are, naturally, augmented by a great number of women who want to bear a child by the divine consort of All Georgia...

Black magic

The monarch and appointed Sovereign can have no opposition – those who dare oppose him are nothing but rebels, traitors and brigands. Gamsakhurdia feels no need to have a constructive opposition. He says with visible satisfaction that there is no opposition in Georgia and his opponents are either paid agents of the Kremlin, traitors of the common cause or criminals. This is the way yesterday's associates who have been less happier at the elections turn into "criminals" and "traitors" to combat whom a "strong hand is needed." Amnestied criminals are putting up police uniforms, often wearing different shoulder straps on one and the same tunic, thus acquiring the status of bona fide guards of law and order: similar troops formed by Dzhaba Ioseliani have been outlawed.

The opposition – dissidents, enlightened intellectuals, convinced democrats and those who have to be democratic by virtue of their position as losers – is in for a more bitter and horrible fate than they see it themselves. The opposition has no popular support. Gamsakhurdia has usurped the slogans of national rebirth, independence and liberty and the opposition can do nothing but keep criticizing and unmasking Gamsakhurdia himself. Gamsakhurdia can perfectly handle this trouble: all media are under his total control. As for the values of a law-governed state, first, few people have any idea about them in Georgia, and, second, Gamsakhurdia has been declared the greatest human rights activist of all times. Few people in Georgia and in Moscow know that the Helsinki Union led by Gamsakhurdia since its very inception is not a member of the authoritative International Helsinki Federation. Meanwhile, the Tbilisi regime's desire to have a good reputation in the West seems to be the only hope of the Georgian opposition. I arrived in Georgia carrying the mandate of an observer representing the International Helsinki Federation. This must have been why Gamsakhurdia wanted to talk to me and why he was so expressly polite during the conversation.

Bowing my head I entered the leader's residence. I have never seen anything like this in my life, but the sight of Gamsakhurdia's office surely rang a bell. I remembered what I read about the offices of big shots of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. A great hall, a lonely figure sitting behind a far-away desk, glossy surfaces, lots of flowers, fluxes of light, a coat of arms behind the man, the magic power Gamsakhurdia emanates which I also experienced. When I finally left the place, I was well under the influence of that horrible charm.

"If only you knew how many enemies I've got! The enemies have taken pains to discredit me before you... A lot of enemies worked to disrupt the elections (yes, they were instructed to do so!) or to question their returns..."

A lot of stupid stuff started coming to my mind: stories and rumours about Zviad's being anthrophos, a black magician, a vampire feeding on the blood of people who are considered missing... Gamsakhurdia may be regarded as the divine or satanic, but the supernatural is always there. "We had been moving to Europe," said the Georgian who was waiting for me outside, "now Gamsakhurdia is herding us back to Asia. I do not need this kind of Georgia."

TBILISI–MOSCOW

Skills for a honeymoon

Do Soviet businessmen need the Foreign Ministry?

Foreign policies of various countries are increasingly defined by economic priorities. In line with this tendency, even such large states as Canada and Australia have openly declared for the priority of foreign economic objectives in the structure of their foreign policies. The US Department of State is traditionally oriented at the interests of American business in its strategy and concrete foreign political efforts. Finally, this tendency has also influenced the Soviet Foreign Ministry, which has established new departments and demonstrated preparedness to cooperate not only with the ruling party, but also with the business circles.

The recent meeting between heads of foreign economic and scientific and technological departments of the Soviet Foreign Ministry and representatives of the South of Russia has shown how serious this preparedness is and which tendencies it has generated. The South of Russia was represented by administrators (in particular, mayors of the cities of Astrakhan, Volgograd and Rostov) and businessmen, including leaders of the unions of lease-holders of the Kuban and Don areas, the Stavropol Territory. The seminar, held under the name "The Soviet Foreign Ministry, the South of Russia and transition to a free market economy" was intended as the beginning of the search for a system of contacts between people who promote national economy and representatives of the state institution that lives off this economy and is supposed to represent economic interests in foreign policy.

It was evident even before the seminar that both sides wanted mutual understanding. In particular, the Foreign Ministry proved the sincerity of its attention to business in the USSR by finding good premises and ample time for the seminar (in the bureaucratic system such a gesture is a clear indication of interest). The sides' intention to hold such meetings on a regular basis also attests to mutual interest. At the same time, the entire course of the discussion, in particular, speeches of some Foreign Ministry officials, which seemed to be addressed to no one, and some businessmen's distorted vision of the functioning of the Foreign Ministry, showed that the relationships between one of the leading state institutions and representatives of business circles of one of this country's key regions were a far cry from a honeymoon.

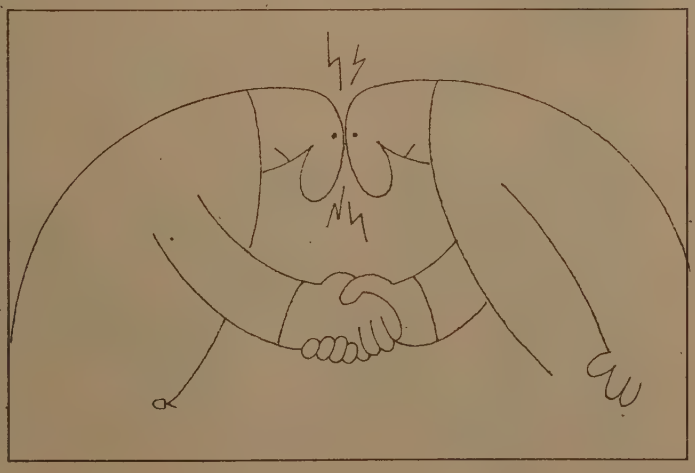
Obviously the diplomats might have regarded the businessmen as rather dull people who fancied they might "cash in" on foreign economic contacts. In the past, no foreign ministry clerk would have as much as turned his head to speak to such people. Times have changed, however. Business is in fashion now. The diplomats know only theoretical reasons behind the business boom. However, they do not seem to have realized in what way their department could cooperate with the business world.

In their turn, Soviet businessmen of the old and new generations have only a vague idea why they need the Foreign Ministry and whether they need it at all. Otherwise many of the speakers would have refrained from depicting it as yet another bureaucratic mediator for their commercial transactions with the world.

One short seminar clearly reflected an ocean of problems generated by the transitional character of today's society. The Union policy exists out of touch with reality. As for the country, it is often unable to understand what it needs the Union institutions for. Both sides realize that they are interested in one another, but they do not understand what exactly the interest is. They need to start a dialogue in order to sort things out, but they have no skills for dialogue.

The situation is aggravated by the fact that one of the two participants in the first dialogue was the business segment of the South of Russia, and the Foreign Ministry did not understand what that meant. The South of Russia occupies a unique position in the country. It is the region that will be supplying food to the rest of the country in the coming times of famine. The South of Russia, not the Baltics or Georgia or Moldavia, is a self-sufficient economic region that can survive on its own. Moreover, it is the South of Russia that has demonstrated remarkable social and ethnic stability against the background of the past few months' turbulent developments in other regions. Management structures are fully in control there. Last but not least, the South of Russia is of a tremendous geopolitical importance. The Soviet Union's foreign trade is vastly oriented at marine shipping. Taking into account the situation in the Baltics, one cannot fail to see the importance of southern ports.

On the whole, the Foreign Ministry has displayed good intentions. However, it does not possess any sufficient understanding of the complexity of its position in the country. This institution, once an integral part of the state machine, is now finding itself in a very shaky position. Its standing among other major state institutions is precarious. The old contacts have been lost or destroyed for a number of reasons. The new ones have not yet appeared. The Foreign Ministry could compensate for its institutional isolation by seeking a new social basis. It is high time for the Foreign Ministry to realize that the prosperity of its officials is rooted not in foreign trips and international conferences, but in the prosperity of taxpayers, in particular, business which is now one of the major taxpayers. The future of state institutions depends not on abstract policies, but on the way they express the interests of influential circles responsible for extricating this country from the bog of the crisis.



Drawing by Sergei Kupria

Konstantin Kinev,
Cand. Sc. (Hist.)

Lady Cox on the front line

A team of independent experts – participants in the Sakharov Memorial Congress recently held in Moscow – has been looking into human rights violations committed during a border conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia

...The people of the Armenian village of Voskepar were too scared to accompany the depluty speaker of the House of Lords, Lady Caroline Cox, to the Azerbaijan border: they are always shooting from there, the Armenians explained. Lady Cox and members of her team were shown dents in the walls, burned houses etc., but they refused to be intimidated. Sakharov's friend, Prof. Richard Wilson of Harvard, lifted a makeshift white flag made of a towel and the group of promient human rights activists headed across the border and into the garrison of an Azerbaijan special-purpose police (OMON) unit.

After Chile and Northern Ireland

"The idea of such an expedition", Yelena Bonner said, "occurred to several participants in the Sakharov Congress at one. President Mikhail Gorbachev supported it and after the Congress a team of. 15 people flew to Armenia and to the conflict areas on a fact-finding mission...

The expedition was headed by Lady Caroline Cox and included Richard Wilson, American lawyer David Leopold (see No.8/91), Caroline Croft of the Human Rights Foundation of the US Congress, William Miller, a director of the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity, British physicist Prof. John Marx, Japanese nuclear scientist Sinjiti Masagaki, executive director of the International Human Rights League Phyllis Gaer, Robert Arsenal, an expert in Soviet-American cultural exchange. All in all, there were 13 foreigners and two Soviets: Yuri Samodurov and Aleksandr Goldin who represented the Organizing Committee of the Sakharov Congress.

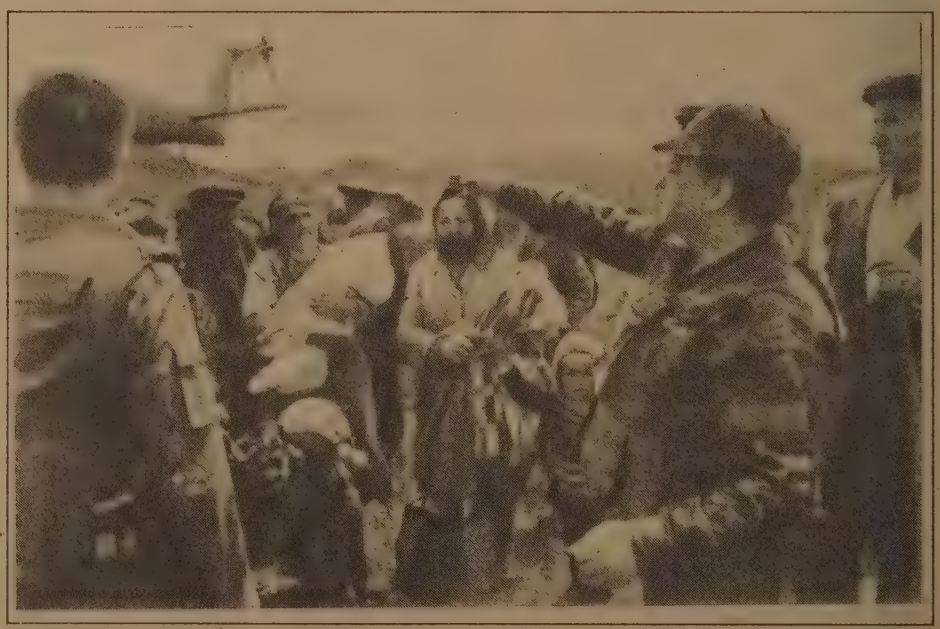
The participants in the expedition split into three groups and headed for three Armenian border villages: Voskepar in the north, Goris in the east and Sadarak in the south, so that to cross the Azerbaijan border there and thus acquire as reliable information as possible about the situation in the conflict area.

"We were using the methods of human rights investigations tested in Chile, Northern Ireland, El Salvador, various African and Asian countries", said Phyllis Gaer, "The information we received from refuges, local people, representatives of the authorities and armed groups was summed up, compared and used as a basis for conclusions. In such situations it is always difficult to determine which side is right and which is wrong. But the character and number of murders, tortures, forced deportations allow us to speak about human rights violations committed on a massive scale, and this calls for immediate action..."

All the three groups collected almost identical information about the April-May deportations of thousands of Armenians from the Armenian villages of Getashen, Berdadzor, Gadrut, Martunashen, etc., situated across the Azerbaijan border. The scenarios of the deportations were similar in all cases.

"Very often those were the villages where the troops of the Ministry of the Interior had been previously deployed", said David Leopold, "but about a month prior to the deportation the troops were withdrawn. Then gunships would appear circling above the village and fresh internal troops would move in. People would think the troops were there to protect them. After they entered the village, the troops checked people's papers, searched homes, detained people at times (the Armenian population put up no resistance, although usually every village had arms). Then the internal troops would leave the village and the Azerbaijan OMON would move in..."

The material collected by the expedition demonstrate that most human rights



Deportation... *Photo from Guardian (Great Britain)*

violations and acts of violence were committed in the Armenian villages by the Azerbaijan OMON. People were fired on, locked in for hours and days with no food or water. A 80-year-old Armenian woman now settled in a refugee camp near Yerevan told that after they moved in, the OMON ordered everyone out of the houses. Her paralized husband remained inside – and an OMON trooper shot him in the legs... Another old woman was put into a barrel in her home's yard and OMON troopers threatened to cut her head off if she would not surrender the arms they said she kept concealed under her dress.

Phyllis Gaer has information that at least 11 Armenian policemen were captured in the border area and can be considered MIAs: their relations know nothing about them and the authorities keep silent. The experts called on the USSR Ministry of Interior and the Interior Ministry of Azerbaijan, the Procuracy of the USSR, to prepare lists of names of all the detained people, specifying the reasons for their arrest and the place of detention, and missing people...

"Write to Comrade Polyanichko"

As a rule, the OMON was followed by people from neighbouring Azerbaijan villages. The concluding report of the experts says they usually took away everything valuable that they could find in Armenian homes. The OMON did some plundering too. David Leopold spoke to some refugees who described such episodes: "OMON troopers would come up to a local inhabitant's car and ask him in loud voices how much he would like for his car: five roubles, or perhaps three would be the sum to pay?

The OMON forced Armenians to sign petitions for resettlement in Armenia. The experts had met no refugee who would say he or she had left the place voluntarily: Everybody wanted to get back. The human rights activists suggested that Procurator General of the USSR Trubin produce a conclusion as to the legal force of "resettlement petition" signed under threats or even torture, and that the Supreme Soviet of the USSR voice its attitude to the developments. They also stressed that many Armenians had been advised to address their complaints to Second Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, Polyanichko (formerly, chief political advisor of the Afghan leader, Babrak Karmal).

The evidence about the role of interior troops (which are subordinated to the Ministry of Interior of the USSR) was more contradictory. According to some testimonies, the interior troops left the village before the coming of the OMON; other witnesses said the interior troops just stood there without interfering in the outrage or respondences to the cries for help.

The group that crossed the border near Goris visited the garrison of a small Soviet Army unit situated on a "strategic elevation" offering a good view of Nagorny Karabakh and the road connecting it with Armenia. The young Russian commander admitted he nearly cried and could hardly resist taking up his submachine gun as he watched the deportation of Armenians. He complained that most men of his unit were Azerbaijanians who would not obey an order to protect Armenians and who would be inclined to set free an Azerbaijan militant if they caught any. Anyhow, the Soviet Army did not interfered with the deportation. This was confirmed also by Defence Minister Yazov who suggested that all the demands put forward by the human rights activists be addressed to Interior Minister Pugo...

One of the recommendations offered as a result of the mission: army units protecting Armenian and Azerbaijan villages must be regularly replaced, and their ethnic composition must be reasonably balanced.

Phyllis Gaer, David Leopold and other experts said they had received warnings that nine more villages would be deported soon. A line connecting the villages looks almost perfectly straight on the map: David Leopold believes the plan is to set up a zone free of any Armenian presence all along the border of Azerbaijan. Earlier Azerbaijan had consented to the proposal of Moscow to set up a ten kilometre buffer zone on either side of the border. Armenia refused; had it accepted the proposal, it would have lost all communication with Nagorny Karabakh...

Experts called for a halt to further deportations, disbanding the OMON and allowing all refugees to return home safely.

"We love Lenin!"

Phyllis Gaer does not directly connect the massive violence against Armenians with Armenia's refusal to sign the Union Treaty. However, she says this is exactly what the local people think the situation is. The commander of a border OMON post in the Azerbaijan enclave of Nakhichevan showed her the havoc wreaked by shellings from the Armenian side and repeated several times so that she understood:

"Tell America and all English-speaking people: we love Lenin, we love Russians, we are staying in the Union!"

Back in Moscow the experts discussed what they saw with Anatoly Lukyanov, but the latter preferred to concentrate on the latest legislative successes of the Union parliament, rather than speak about the Transcaucasia. The guests got an impression that the head of the Union parliament, who kept stressing the necessity to find "a political way out of the conflict," was rather indifferent to the stories about human rights violations. They also thought Anatoly Lukyanov had some pro-Azerbaijan bias. When Lukyanov reproached his guests for being prejudiced in favour of Armenia, they asked him to help organize a trip to Azerbaijan (earlier diplomatic efforts taken by Lady Cox, who hoped to fly from Yerevan to Stepanakert on a helicopter, had been fruitless).

Anatoly Lukyanov contacted President Mutalibov of Azerbaijan and the consent was received.

Four participants in the Sakharov Congress were allowed to visit villages in the Shusha and Gadrut districts of Nagorny Karabakh, abandoned by many Armenians as well as some villages in the Shaumyan district, the city of Stepanakert and the town of Khodzhaly? However, they were not allowed to enter the conflict area.

Members of the expedition spent four hours talking to President Mutalibov and Chairman of the Standing Commission for State Sovereignty under the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan, Dashdamirov. To the surprise of the guests their interlocutors not only refused to deny the fact of the deportations, but even tried to justify them. The reasons provided were the struggle against Armenian militants and the hope "that the Armenian leadership might be forced to abolish the decree of the Supreme Soviet of Armenia according to which Armenia agreed to incorporate Nagorny Karabakh on the request of the latter".

"Actually", David Leopold and Robert Arsenal specified, "no one of the officials we met with ever denied that the Azerbaijan OMON engaged in gangsterism, killings, robberies, that they had victimized women, children and old people!"

On the other hand, it was pointed to the participants of the expedition that while the world was so indignant with the deportation of Armenians, it did not pay any attention to the 1988 deportation of Azerbaijanians from Armenia. Experts met with refugee familiies and heard stories about how the Armenian authorities gave Azerbaijanians twenty four hours to get packed and leave for Azerbaijan.

Having spent a total of three days in Armenia and on the border of the two republics and two days in Baku the human rights activists returned to Moscow to provide the final recommendations:

– to declare the region a zone of disaster and to call for international humanitarian help;

– to invite international observers to provide for the safety of the population and fair distribution of the aid among the victims. To open Nagorny Karabakh and the adjacent areas for detailed international inspection;

– to invite a UN expert to investigate the killings that occurred during the deportations.

Lev Yelin

Gennady Filshin:

"In politics you can either do your job or engage in intrigues. It is difficult – and for me it is impossible – to combine both pursuits"

Gennady Filshin, one of the new politicians who joined the Yeltsin–Silayev team, is interviewed by *New Times*. He resigned after the "140 billion rubles affair," but has not given up the hope of his career development

Gennady FILSHIN, born in 1931, a people's deputy of the USSR and Deputy Minister for Foreign Economic Ties of Russia.

After the "140 billion rubles affair" you resigned from the post of deputy premier of the Russian Federation. It was generally believed that you gave up the civil service for ever. What made you to accept a new appointment?

After my resignation I received fairly many offers, including tempting ones. But I had a feeling that I had not completed a very important cause. The job I took up led to consequences not very pleasant to me. Nevertheless I intend to fulfil my programme.

"My post in the Council of Ministers remains vacant"

As we understand it, your new appointment is a serious demotion. It is a disaster in life for the majority of people belonging to the establishment. How did you survive the transfer from a higher to a lower post?

A post as such has never interested me. My work in the ministry for foreign economic ties enables me to continue what I did in the government, namely, to use the world economy to tackle our internal problems, first of all, to develop the consumer market.

Did your colleagues' attitude towards you change after you resigned from your high post?

During my work in the Russian government, I always made it clear that I value professionalism, intellectual boldness and the ability to achieve results. People immediately see the difference between an interesting work and the formal functions. I adhere to American criteria in the evaluation of personnel. I value those employees who do not need permanent supervision, explanations and permissions on the part of their chiefs, but themselves decide what and how to do and answer for their actions. I granted professional freedom to those with whom I worked. People liked such an approach, it inspired them. I did not avoid responsibility and decision-making myself, though I understood it was easier to hold the post if I coordinated my actions with my superiors. My former post in the Council of Ministers remains vacant. The ministries I supervised are virtually neglected till now. Silayev has not yet succeeded in finding a proper man for the post.

It seemed that the Russian government parted with you very easily, without a fight. Was it more important for it to preserve its reputation rather than a separate official?

Ivan Silayev, whom I highly respect, was then in a difficult situation. It was a time when the tone in the republican parliament too was set by conservative forces who had become extremely active.

Would you remain in the government in a different situation?

It is very easy to find fault with a person who constantly takes responsible decisions himself without shifting the burden on others. In general, I was very vulnerable. My opponents looked for an occasion to attack me for a long time. But I always acted openly. An experienced official knows how to avoid responsibility. I am not a dilettante, not a stranger. For many years I worked in the State Planning Committee, where I headed a department.

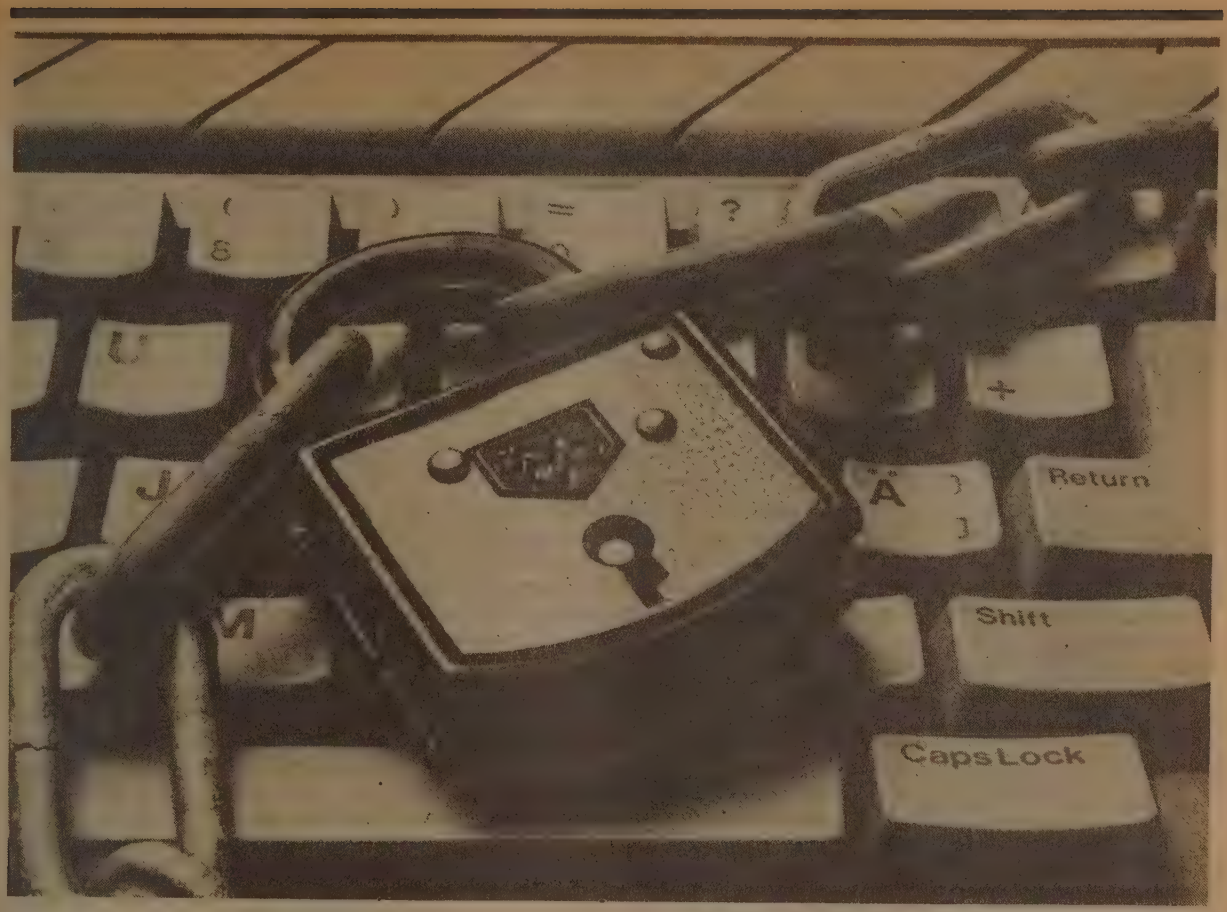
So you are a veteran apparatchik who "reformed" after 1985, aren't you?

That is not so at all. It became interesting to work in the State Planning Committee after the Kosygin reform. True, this period did not last long. In my article published in the Novosibirsk magazine *EKO* in 1971 I wrote that the current policy of resources and investments management was disastrous and that only 4 – 5 percent of our equipment measured up to the world standards. Only Academician Aganbegian could dare publish such an article. After my article was published, I was forced to resign from the State Planning Committee.

"Silayev is compelled to reckon with them"

How did your constituency react to the "140 billion rubles affair"?

They formed a committee for defence of Filshin, but I assured them by saying that I shall manage on my own.



From the newspaper Zeit (Germany)

What is your political orientation?

I am a member of the inter-regional group of deputies in which I was asked to deal with economic matters. At the second congress of people's deputies of the USSR I submitted an alternative draft decision on the 1990 plan and budget to Gorbachev and Lukyanov.

Did it have any consequences?

I was given the floor at the congress. The course of developments showed that I was right. The plan for 1990 ended in failure and the budget deficit increased. After that I was utterly engrossed by my work in the Russian government. Many other members of the inter-regional group of deputies did the same. It turned out that we virtually gave up our work in the Union parliament.

Did the other members of the Russian government share your ideas?

If it were so. The Russian government was formed on a coalition basis. I think it was a mistake. The government can comprise members of various parties, but the economic programme must be the same. Unfortunately, the situation is different in the Russian government. The lobby of the agro-industrial complex exerts considerable pressure on the government policy.

Wherein lies its strength?

First of all, it is numerous and, secondly, it is actively supported by the Communist party of the Russian Federation.

Is the Communist Party's opinion of any importance to the Silayev cabinet?

Certainly it is.

Are we wrong in thinking that the Russian government is opposed to the Communist Party?

Yes. Your opinion about the alignment of forces within the government and outside it does not accord with reality. I think that if Yeltsin is elected president, he will make the government more homogeneous. I said many times, to Minister Kulik too, that as long as the agro-industrial complex and its structures remain in place, the people will live in poverty.

Did premier Silayev support you or Kulik (also his deputy)?

Sometimes he took my side and sometimes, under the pressure from the agro-industrial lobby, he adopted wrong decisions, in my opinion. I could mention here an exorbitant increase in purchase prices. As an economist I cannot agree with the fact that in the Bratsk district of the Irkutsk region, for instance, the purchase price of one kilo of beef has been raised to 26 rubles. Such prices corrupt the producer. Easy money kills the incentive to increase output. Though I was responsible for price policy in the government and the committee for prices was subordinate to me, the government adopted a decision to which I objected.

Why did Silayev ignore your arguments?

It was a political, not economic decision. Silayev was compelled to reckon with the fact that the democrats did not yet have solid support in the countryside. Are there many peasants in Russia ready to work independently, to become farmers?

"The Soviet Union makes borowings, and no one knows where the money goes"

Let us talk about the ministry for foreign economic ties for which you are working now. Ninety percent of foreign economic operations are still handled by the central government. Don't you think that in this

situation the establishment of a Russian ministry for foreign economic ties was rather a whim than necessity. The same can be said about the desire to have all other ministries, including the State Security Committee.

You are wrong in both cases. The tragedy of Russia is that it did not have its own government structures. The central government "took care" of Russia in everything. The interests of the Russian Federation are impossible to defend without its own structures of power. If the Russian ministry for foreign economic ties was nothing but show, I would simply refuse to work for it.

What can Russia expect to have from its ministry for foreign economic ties? The Union ministry has international ties which have been established for decades. It has its missions abroad and the privilege to use freely hard currency. What do you have?

The process of transferring foreign economic operations from the Union to republics is now getting under way. Foreign trade associations are becoming independent joint-stock companies and will operate largely on orders from republican structures, while the Union ministry is becoming a consultative and coordinating centre. I can assure you that in the division of spheres of influence Russia behaves with greater tact than other republics. Russia will also have its representatives abroad – within the existing trade delegations of the USSR at the present stage. Of course we assume not only rights, but also commitments. Russia accounts for 80 percent of the Soviet Union's export. We pledge to guarantee the fulfilment on the territory of Russia of all contracts concluded earlier. But our ministry sees its task broader. It wants to create the best possible conditions for exporters to make them interested in work for export. It is one thing to divide the currency and another thing to earn it.

Where will you get foreign currency?

I insist that a tax should be introduced not on currency earnings (which is robbery), but on part of the profit from foreign economic activity. The earned currency must not be taken away.

What you are saying looks nice. However, foreign currency is needed not only by enterprises which can earn it, but first of all by industries which are unable to earn it. I have in mind the medical, light and food industries. Where can they get currency?

The redistribution of hard currency resources should look as follows, in my opinion. Through its committee for material and technical resources the government can conclude an agreement with exporting enterprises for the purchase of a part of their export products. In this way it can get currency to finance socially important programmes. It will also be able to refrain possibly to the utmost from taking (as the Union cabinet does) too large foreign credits not supported by exports resources.

Are you against receiving credits?

The Soviet Union makes borrowings, and no one knows where the money goes.

You did not have such information even in the post of Russia's deputy premier, did you?

There is no such information, or it is kept secret. The republic must not live by begging. Who will repay credits? Those who take credits must prove first that they can repay them by a specified date. At present this rule is not observed, at least in Russia, especially by those who worked in old structures always maintained by higher bodies. I have a different concept of using the West's readiness to invest money in our economy. True, I have paid dearly for the attempt to put it into effect.

"To buy food and clothes to the sum of 130–150 billion rubles"

What is the essence of your programme? You refuse to take credits and what's next?

When I began to work for the Russian government, I formulated my task in the following way: it is necessary to stabilize the consumer market. As long as shops are empty and people spend hours trying to buy the most essential things, one cannot expect them to work efficiently. We envisaged all conceivable incentives for the manufacturers of consumer goods and found money for an immediate construction of facilities to improve the situation on the consumer market. It turned out, however, that there was nothing to build on a modern scale. There were not even enough projects and not a single design office which could work for the consumer market at a proper level. The consumer sphere was in a state of neglect. Thus, we were confronted with two problems right away: empty shops and the shortage of funds. The funds invested to encourage the growth of individual farming and the consumer market will not bring quick returns.

How are we to survive the transition period? It seems that credits will be necessary.

Credits will not help us. Money should be invested in the economy, it is not to be consumered. My idea was to make large-scale purchases of food and goods in order to knock prices down (which can simply strangle us in conditions of a total shortage of products) and to remove social tension. These purchases were supposed to make our producers feel the effects of a competition.

How much food must be bought abroad to feed the giant Russia? And how much will it cost?

It was planned to buy food and clothes to the sum of 130–150 billion rubles. We calculated then that precisely this amount of money kept by the population is not provided with goods. It was necessary to ensure the supply of goods in shops and to prevent the flow of goods to the black market. The rubles gained from the sale of imported goods were not to be taken out of the country or exchanged into dollars. They were to be invested in projects for which we did not have funds. Thus, a dual task would have been achieved: the market would be saturated and funds for investment in the economy would be available.

Why should Western companies be interested in deals of this kind? They are advantageous to us so obviously that doubts inevitably creep in: don't Western partners pursue some non-economic aims in this case?

This is so to a certain extent. The West understands that it is going to lose by making feeble Soviet democracy face an economic crisis. A social explosion in the Soviet Union, a sharp turn to the right or back will be a heavy blow to Europe and the world. Businessmen understand that such deals are more advantageous to them than granting credits. They can come to the Soviet Union and examine the cost analysis of the project in which they are invited to invest and to appraise its would-be effectiveness. If they give a credit, it is not known yet whether they will be able to get their money back. In above-mentioned deals they are able to see to it that the project is realized.

"An attempt to compromise the Russian government"

How were you going to pay Western companies for their assistance?

All the projects we intended to finance in this way were supposed to produce goods for export. So the companies would receive either part of the products or part of the currency earnings.

Many projects were conceived as export-oriented, but the plans went awry.

In the scheme we offered to Western companies they would be interested in

helping us to retool, update enterprises and provide new technologies. And we have found such companies.

What projects were you going to implement in this way?

I could mention the upgrading of Tyumen oil fields' infrastructure and the resumption of output at forsaken fields, the building of well-appointed houses and the organization of community services and amenities at timber industry complexes in the Krasnoyarsk territory. We wanted to invest money in regions with large resources, where people live so badly that a social explosion can happen any day. In the Irkutsk region, for instance, there is a gas deposit, but the ministry concerned postponed the exploitation of it till the next millenium, because of the lack of resources for this purpose. We could set up an association and import food and goods to the sum of from 150 to 200 million dollars for the region. The association would earn roughly two billion rubles and start pumping gas, part of which would go for export. The project has obvious merits. We would solve ecological and technological problems and provide raw materials for domestic consumption and export.

Why has such a wonderful idea had a deplorable result, namely, the "140 billion rubles affair"?

I think this is explained to a large extent by the attempt to compromise the Silayev cabinet because of its attitude to Yeltsin. There was also jealosy on the part of the Central Government, for the Russian Federation would become independent in its foreign economic activity. I must say that I discussed the project with the Union leadership, and I am sure that if I began to implement it on a Union level, no "affair" would arise.

In other words, you believe that you have fallen victim to an intrigue?

I believe so. In politics, you can either do your job or engage in intrigues. It is difficult – and for me it is impossible – to combine both pursuits.

What was behind the "140 billion rubles affair?"

Two unrelated processes were deliberately combined into one, and things were presented in a way that I favoured an illegal deal. In fact, my task was to develop a common strategy and to see to it that both sides follow a common line: the import of goods, investment in industry and payment of debts at the expense of new capacities.

Does this mean that your idea, which seems so tempting, has no prospects of it being implemented?

I don't think so. Not only the republican, but also the Union government should now think of materializing it. Even at the height of attacks from the right against me I felt that I was right and therefore I believed that we should return to this project.

Interviewers **Leonid Mlechin and Tatiana Chernova**

Photo by Vladimir Panov

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USSR — USA

The Lisbon symptom: the crisis is over

Moscow is waiting for Bush, London is waiting for Gorbachev

Galina Sidorova,
New Times special correspondent

The two adversaries finally met face to face. The documents on Angolan settlement were signed. All those present – the diplomats, the journalists, the observers – froze waiting for the necessary handshake. The pause dragged on for a little bit too long. For President Jose Eduardo dos Santos of Angola and the UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi, it was much more difficult to shake hands than to meet at the bargaining table where they had been led by cool calculation: one wanted to remain in power, the other wanted to come to power. As a result of thirteen years of war it finally became obvious that there was only one way to power open to the two adversaries – the legitimate one. However, the movement of hands could not submit to the call of reason. Some impatient negotiators stood up, their backs barring the historic moment of the handshake from the eager cameras. Insistent demands for a repeat handshake fell flat. The two leaders resumed their seats with visible relief.

Each side arranged for a separate celebration of peace. Journalists who accompanied the Soviet Foreign Minister, representative of one of the two superpowers – observers and guarantors of settlement, gathered to celebrate the historic event too – to the extent allowed by per diem – with French fries and some delicious Portuguese Rose to follow at a nice little fast-food outlet.

An Angolan romance of the two superpowers

The participants in the settlement had already been over the very first stage of the process, but it was evident that the main difficulties were still ahead. Such a speedy conclusion of the settlement accords could not have seemed possible in the spring of last year when Eduard Shevardnadze, then the Soviet Foreign Minister, visited Angola.

Four documents worked out in the course of inter-Angolan talks mediated by Portugal and observed by representatives of the USSR and the USA were signed in Lisbon in the presence of the UN Secretary General, President of the Organization of African Unity, Foreign Minister of the USSR and Secretary of State of the USA. These documents include The Ceasefire Agreement, The Conceptual Approaches to the Solution of the Remaining Problems between the Government of the People's Republic of Angola and the UNITA, and the Estoril Protocol. The Ceasefire Agreement stipulates, in particular, that Moscow and Washington halt arms supplies to any Angolan side and call on other countries to follow suit. The Basic Principles of the Establishment of Peace in Angola stipulate that the UNITA recognizes the government of Angola and President Eduardo dos Santos until the next elections and receives the right to free participation in political activities. A Joint Military-Political Commission is to be set up. The United States, the Soviet Union and Portugal participate in the Joint Commission as observers. The transition period will last until the elections scheduled for the autumn of 1992 which are to be held under international supervision. The MPLA and the UNITA are going to solicit the help of UN police experts in organizing a national police force. The UNITA becomes a full-fledged political party, an integrated system of political administration is to be set up and integrated national armed forces created.

Today there are 200 Soviet military advisors in Angola. So far their future has not been decided. Such problems will come under the competence of the Joint Military Political Commission. Angola's two major political forces are going to cooperate in choosing the nation that will brief them on how to create a modern army.

This settlement is a crucial turning point in the life of the wonderful and rich African country returning into the fold of world civilization. As for me, I was especially interested in the international aspects of the settlement. The situation in Angola, however contraversial it may be, reflects the

common processes under way in the world community – deideologization, the understanding that civil wars and intolerance aggravate national and economic crises, lead to stagnation and degradation of the state and society.

Soviet-American partnership in managing local conflicts, be it in Angola or the Middle East, is becoming more and more visible and effective. At the same time, the growing role of the cooperating superpowers in solving global problems is sometimes causing fears and suspicion in the Third World.

A question to the Soviet Minister:

"Did you feel any such fears during the talks with the Angolans, Syrians and other Third World partners?"

A.Bessmertnykh. I did not feel any such fears, but I know that the Third World press is writing much about them. Nonetheless, nothing of the kind has ever been mentioned during the talks with the Angolans and representatives of the Organization of African Unity – the OAU chairman was present at the negotiations. On the contrary, the Third World is starting to sense the effectiveness of Soviet American partnership. I admit, Soviet-American cooperation is not something the Third World is used to. In the past, the Third World even benefited from the Soviet-American confrontation, because they managed to capitalize on the heavily ideologized international atmosphere. Now the picture is different. However, there is nothing egoistic in the activities of the United States and the Soviet Union – counting out the obvious fact that the settlement of any conflict is in the interests of both superpowers. We would like to liberate the world from conflicts, thus securing conditions for stable development. But the Third World countries also have to reconsider their policies and to adjust to the new conditions. I would like to stress: neither the Soviet Union nor the United States have any intention to replace the UN and other international organizations by superpower cooperation. We complement these organizations, we sometimes use our international weight and authority to guarantee their decisions and, sometimes, the process of negotiations...

Remarkably, Soviet-American interaction in the Middle East which Bessmertnykh and Baker have recently toured and in Angola developed parallelly and, I would say, contrary to the general tendency for growing coolness in Moscow-Washington political, economic and military relations. Moreover, superpower regional partnership which had initially been the most difficult point of the USSR-US agenda, now helps to slow down the Soviet-American estrangement. The accords signed in Lisbon became a natural prologue to the Soviet-American ministerial a day later.

The General's diplomatic solo

The ministers negotiated in English with no interpreters present and were assisted by the minimal number of aides. The impression was that for the first time in several months the sides had a more or less clear vision of the end result they wanted to achieve by negotiating. That must be why the result of the Lisbon ministerial was so impressive: finally the sides reached an agreement concerning the sensitive issue of the CFE Treaty. The last disputed problem of the armaments of the Soviet Marine Corps was removed. It must be recalled that the problems with the CFE Treaty started immediately after its signing by leaders of 22 states in Paris. The interpretation of the Treaty offered by the Soviet military was actually a way to circumvent the Treaty and made the ratification by the other 22 states impossible. The talks had to be continued. After the recent Washington visit by the Soviet Chief-of-Staff, General Moiseyev, Soviet diplomats and military convened for their own negotiations in Moscow. The result was the letter by Gen. Moiseyev addressed to the head of the American negotiating team with whom he had dealt in Washington. Bessmertnykh handed the letter to James Baker. The Soviet Minister called the final stage of negotiations "mathematics of the weapons movements." This week Soviet and American experts are meeting in Moscow to finalize the Treaty for ratification.

The epic with the transfer of army tanks to the Marine Corps so as to deceive American and European partners was finally over to the satisfaction of all sides. So far the two foreign ministers have resolutely declined the demands to specify the details of the talks. James Baker said, in particular, that it was a multilateral treaty and before he could reveal the essence of the compromise he had to notify the allies.

The most interesting development during the final stage of the CFE process was the diplomatic solo performed by General Moiseyev. Obviously, the Soviet policy-makers must have decided it was time the military did some diplomacy too instead of criticizing the diplomats, so that both the military and the diplomats could face the Supreme Soviet during the ratification hearings. The Chief-of-Staff or one of his high-ranking representatives is very likely to take part in the Geneva talks on finalizing the START Treaty.

According to Bessmertnykh, the ministerial compromise was as follows: after the CFE problems had been removed, the sides would focus on the START issues. Some START issues remain unresolved – telemetric control, the problems connected with the number of warheads on one of the Soviet subs which had been commissioned with one number of warheads and is now rumoured to carry a different number of warheads. If we man-

Bessmertnykh and Baker: going to meet almost every week pending summit

age to get the treaty finalized within three to four weeks, which is physically possible if we don't sleep nights, then another Soviet-American summit will be possible to arrange as early as this summer."

By the way, the ministers agreed to meet practically every week in June.

Lately, the talks have indeed been bogged in technical details. As a rule, this happens when there is no political will for agreement.

A question to James Baker:

"Does the intensive attention to the START Treaty mean that the sides have already taken the political decision to finalize it by the time of the summit?"

J.Baker. Both Presidents have repeatedly stressed they wanted to conclude this agreement and to sign it during the summit. This seems to me the political solution, although there are still some questions we will have to settle...

A question to A.Bessmertnykh:

"Are the sides prepared to take the political decision enabling them to remove the technical problems connected with the START treaty?"

A.Bessmertnykh. We are prepared. After my conversation with Mr. Baker, the American side is going to consider this question. The Secretary of State said he would inform President Bush about the results of our talks. But the fact that we have agreed to intensively cooperate now on strategic arms attests to that the US leadership also understands the necessity to solve this problem, which is of vital importance for the United States, the Soviet Union and international strategic stability...

Two in Moscow and eight in London?

A week ago I would have been highly doubtful about the possibility of this turn of events. Now I am positive, the Soviet-American summit will take place. The START Treaty will be finalized. Mikhail Gorbachev will go to London.

What makes me so positive?

After I talked to some members of the Soviet and American delegations and despite my interlocutors' diplomatic evasion of naming dates and specifying events, I became positive that the main step had been done – the political decision had been taken and new disarmament treaties would not be running the risk of getting bogged in technicalities. The decision was taken on the very top. And, which is most important, at **our** very top. Everything that is happening now at the talks in Vienna and Geneva is only elements of a comprehensive political decision.

Savimbi followers celebrate peace. So far separately from the MPLA

When they stress the importance of domestic events in the USSR and their influence on Soviet-American cooperation they divide the perestroika period of USSR-USA relations into the pre-Vilnius and post-Vilnius stages (before and after the January 13 crackdown).

I would go farther than that. The decline in Soviet-American relations started when President Gorbachev backpedalled on the 500-Day Programme of radical economic recovery. Today the Soviet President seems to have returned to his old centrist policy with carefully concealed reliance on the democrats and a short leash for the hard-liners. However, the conservative zigzag cost dearly both the country and the international prestige of Gorbachev himself. Now Mikhail Gorbachev has executed another political manoeuvre which is traditionally unpopular in the Soviet Union – he has asked for foreign assistance. But this was done at the moment when, despite all reservations, Western leaders' sympathies and political interest in Gorbachev increased again.

During a stopover in Rome, Bessmertnykh discussed with his Italian counterpart the possibility of Gorbachev's participation in the London meeting of the Big Seven.

After the talks I asked Gianni De Michelis whether Italy realized the magnitude of risks involved in giving extensive aid to the USSR and whether the Italian government would want any political or economic guarantees from the USSR?

De Michelis. In my opinion, the April 23 agreement reached between Moscow and nine republics is a new development and a kind of political guarantee. Nothing of the kind was there before. Naturally, there are some risks involved, but we believe that for us, and Western Europe as a whole, the great risk is the Soviet Union's too difficult perestroika progress and too long way to success. We have evaluated the situation thoroughly and we believe that in case we did not step in, the risks would be greater...

"The question is," **A.Bessmertnykh** went on to say, "whether we would be able to take any steps to ensure a more effective and a more productive transition from one system to another in the Soviet Union. In case the Soviet Union is represented at the meeting of the Big Seven, the Soviet leader will be able to tell his Western counterparts about his concept of transition reforms and to share the hopes and difficulties involved. Gorbachev will be able to speak about mutually profitable joint project this country is ready to conclude with all interested countries." After the meetings in European capitals and on the basis of information about the talks which Soviet representatives had in Washington, the Soviet Minister got an impression, as he said, that the Big Seven was getting ready for the meeting.

I believe that the US President is highly likely to come to Moscow before the London meeting, because President Bush would be interested to know what Gorbachev is going to take along to the London meeting, and to discuss Gorbachev's ideas on the bilateral basis.

The appeal to the West is fraught with some risks. The risk, however, is not that our vast country can be sold down the river to the greedy capitalists. The main risk is our consumerist attitude to any foreign help, to the tangible results of Gorbachev's visit to London, if Gorbachev is going there in the first place. No asistance will help until we start implementing reforms in earnest.

On the other hand, any state, be it Angola, or the Soviet Union which retains its superpower status by military-strategic standards or by sheer inertia, may need international support in the time of trouble. This is what the new world order is all about. Today Moscow and Washington are promoting the new world order by their efforts in various regions of the world. However, for the world community to reach this new order is as difficult a task as it was for the two Angolan leaders to shake hands in front of the eager cameras.

ROME–LISBON–MOSCOW

Photos by the author and TASS

Semipalatinsk Relief Fund

for victims of nuclear tests

700802

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The Relief Fund for victims of nuclear tests on the Semipalatinsk testing range in Kazakhstan, USSR, is looking for sponsors and partners to open representations in various regions of the country. We want to set up joint commercial ventures with Soviet and foreign firms. The objectives of the Fund are varied, but our strategic task is to help victims of nuclear tests carried out near the city of Semipalatinsk; those invalided since childhood, oncological patients and radiation sickness patients. The profits from the Fund's activities will be used for stepping up charitable activities along the following lines:

- construction of a rehabilitation centre
- construction of a charity home and an asylum for the aged
- setting up small ventures and cooperatives that will employ invalids and other people
- social assistance to the radiation sickness patients

In 1991 the Fund plans to prepare the blueprints of the rehabilitation centre and the asylum for the aged (approximate cost of the projects about 10 million rubles). The Fund can allocate only 35,000 rubles. The rest of the money will have to be raised. The Relief Fund for victims of nuclear tests was established on June 9, 1990, and registered on January 29, 1991.

We are addressing directors and heads of associations, firms and enterprises asking for financial aid needed for the construction of the rehabilitation centre. The donations and profits earned by the Fund are distributed by the city's leading doctors and the presidium of the Fund's Board.

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To emigrate or not to emigrate?

The recent visit of Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh to Israel is regarded as a major step towards rapprochement between Moscow and Tel Aviv. However, the five-hour stay of Bessmertnykh in Tel Aviv was obviously not enough for solving the main problem, namely, the restoration of diplomatic relations. What do Soviet Jews think on this occasion?

The war in the Persian Gulf did not stop Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. Last year 185,000 Jews left it to settle in Israel. For comparison, 35,000 Jews came to Israel from Ethiopia in the last two years. In the first months of this year 50,000 Jews emigrated from the Soviet Union. The most painful question now is the fear that emigration will be halted. There are grounds for such fear. The law on travel was passed with difficulty and will come into force only in 1993.

Soviet conservatives are afraid that five to seven million people are eagerly waiting for the time when they can pack up their belongings – no reason to be happy since only 20 kg of unaccompanied luggage is allowed to take, however – and get rid of the party and government tutelage. Should all of them be allowed to go away? Who will take care of the old parents then? The country might remain without hard currency, they claim, if every emigrant is paid 100 dollars for rubles at the exchange rate of one dollar for 27.6 rubles.

And for the time being...

Those who leave have to register their valuable luggage for 700 rubles and be prepared to wait for their plane in the airport for several days.

In Israel they are faced with serious problems, the threat of a social explosion with unpredictable consequences. It is worse than Scud missiles or the unburnt debris of a Soviet satellite which at the height of Iraqi bombing fell into a garbage dump in Tel Aviv suburbs. The emigrants will also encounter hunger strikes, the doctors' vigils of protest, demonstrations of new settlers in Lod, a tent town of homeless new settlers in Carmel, and so on. People come to Israel with empty hands. They often have no idea of the country and do not know its language, but they hope for economic prosperity. On seeing that life is not so easy there as they thought, they experience dissatisfaction and disappointment.

The "absorption basket," a loan paid to emigrants in the first year which is to be returned later on, equals 19,156 shekels for a married couple and 7,904 shekels for a single person. A three-room flat costs from 52,000 to 140,000 shekels, depending on the area of the country. It takes at best about eight years to save money and buy a flat provided an emigrant finds a well-paid job. However, far from everyone can find such a job. Israeli employers are not satisfied with the training which Soviet Jews receive at USSR colleges and, then, not all professions are needed. For instance, Israel needs builders, but not prospectors for oil, because there are no oil deposits in the country.

The ninth assembly of the World Jewish Congress took place in Jerusalem on May 5-12. It was attended for the first time by representatives of the Soviet Jews. The delegation form the confederation of Jewish communities and organizations, Vaad consisted of 65 people who represented not only the Vaad but also the all-Union religious Jewish community and the Makkabe sports club. The main result of the assembly was the formation of a fifth section in the World Jewish Congress in addition to four others – North American, South American, European and Israeli. It was called the Eurasian section. The new section includes all regions and republics of the USSR and the Jewish community in Poland. Mikhail Chlenov was elected its chairman.

The inclusion of Soviet Jews in the world Jewish community has ended the long period of their isolation. One of the first initiatives of the new section was the proposal for setting up a special commission with the participation of the Israeli government, world Jewish organizations, representatives of organized Soviet Jews and new settlers in Israel. This commission would examine the problems of emigration to Israel.

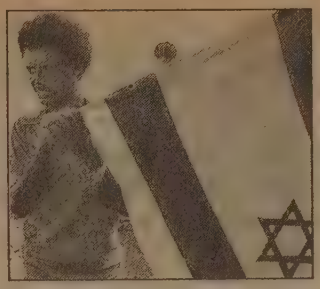
Long queues to embassies in Moscow *Photo from Newsweek (USA)*

The government is unable to solve the problem of emigration by relying on its own resourses only, it is impossible to solve this problem within Israel, Mikhail Chlenov said at a press conference held in Moscow on his return from Jerusalem.

Yelena Gorbunova

■

Operation Solomon



It took 30 hours to airlift Falashas – black Jews – from Ethiopia to Israel

Israeli troops took the Addis Ababa airport under their control. The operation began at six o'clock in the morning on May 24. At the last moment the Ethiopian authorities demanded 35 million dollars. Without arguing, Israelis transferred the amount to a New York bank.

By the midday of May 25, making shuttle flights, 35 civilian and military aircraft had flown 14, 194 black Jews.

This action had been carefully prepared for several months. At first, Falashas had been transported from the Gonder province, in the north of Ethiopia, to Addis Ababa. In the capital they settled round the Israeli embassy. Because of the material aid from the Israeli government, rather considerable by Ethiopian standards, Falashas bought expensive food and articles. This inflated prices on the city market and aroused discontent among citizens of the capital. However, the idea of an urgent evacuation arose only at the moment when the situation in Ethiopia completely got out of control. The real threat to the security of the unique Jewish community compelled Tel Aviv and the World Zionist Organization to make tremendous efforts to effect Operation Solomon. After long negotiations between Israeli and Ethiopian officials, on May 23 the Ethiopian government allowed Israelis to carry out an airlift operation.

The mass emigration of "black Jews" aroused deep concern in Arab countries. They think that, together with Soviet Jews, this category of "new Israelis" will be allocated land for settlement in the occupied Arab territories.

The Operation Solomon was enthusiastically welcomed in Israel. "We are witnessing the realization of the most lofty mission of Zionism and the sacred goal for the sake of which the Jewish state has been built," Israeli President Haim Herzog said then.

Scholars are still arguing about the historical roots of the Falasha people. According to some data, this tribe, close to the Ethiopian nationality Agau, adopted Judaism before the fourth century A.D., when Christianity began to spread in Ethiopia. Other sources believe that the Falashas are descendants of migrants from the Middle East.

The Ethiopian Jews trace their origin back to the legendary King Solomon and the queen of Sheba. It is also believed that the Falashas are descended from one of the Israelite tribes which went astray during the exodus from Egyptian captivity.

The rabbinical courts in Jerusalem concluded that the Falashas are descendants of the Dans, one of the 12 Israelite tribes. On the whole, their Judaism is much closer to Ethiopian Christianity than to the religious practice of Israelites. Falashas do not know many postulates of the Talmud and a number of Judaic rituals. Their religion differs from present Judaism so much that the Israeli rabbinate specially discussed the question of whether the descendants from Ethiopia are eligible to visit the Wailing Wall.

Trials are awaiting the Falashas in their new homeland. The Israeli ambassador to Ethiopia said that each of them should be led by the hand and shown how to use the closet or a refrigerator, and that a social worker should be assigned to every three or four families. Last year, the ambassador recalled, the gap between their culture and the modern world was demonstrated when a group of migrants tried to make a fire in the passenger cabin of the plane in order to warm up the breakfast.

The exodus of Jews from Ethiopia began back in the 1950s, when hundreds of Jews freely left Ethiopia, then a monarchy, to settle in the Promised Land. In 1984 and 1985 up to 15,000 Falashas were taken out to Israel in the secret operation coded Moses. Mengistu Haile Mariam then condemned the action as the "kidnapping of people."

The position of Ethiopian authorities regarding the emigration of Falashas changed after the restoration of diplomatic relations with Israel in November 1989. Some 8,000 black Jews were allowed to go to Israel. Later the emigration problem seemed to have become a trump card in Addis Ababa's relations with Israel and the United States. In exchange for Falashas Addis Ababa sought to receive military aid from Tel Aviv. The reduction of emigration was connected mainly with the fact that young people of other nationalities who were to be called up for military service tried to leave Ethiopia by declaring themselves Falashas.

The Israelis estimate that no less than 2,000 black Jews still remain in Ethiopia. "We shall not know rest until the remaining Jews are brought home from Ethiopia. It is an unfinished symphony," said Foreign Minister David Levi.

Yakov Borovoi

■ The 8th Moscow International Book Fair will be held on the grounds of the USSR Exhibition of Economic Achievements, Moscow, from September 3 to 9 of this year.

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Moscow International Book Fair

Dangerous non-interference

The world community has lost the chance to set up a democracy in Iraq, believes **Alexander YANOV,** professor of politology at the University of New York

"I cannot understand why the Soviet Union did not resolutely join the international coalition arrayed against Iraq. It was absoluely clear that the Iraqi dictator would not be talked out of Kuwait. Saddam Hussein annexed Kuwait and he would not honour any verbal declarations, any Arab decisions. Naturally, it rejected all the initiatives of the USSR," he said.

We met with Prof. Yanov during his recent visit to Moscow and he spoke about the events in the Middle East and their influence on the USSR:

"In his book Gorbachev said the Soviet Union was against aggressions and any forms of violence. But what was to be done in the context when the Iraqi aggression had already been a fait accompli and Iraq was terrorizing the people of Kuwait? It turned out that Gorbachev's new political thinking just did not work, remaining an impotent Tolstovian sermon of non-violence. Thus the idea of new political thinking became heavily compromized. An atmosphere of international disapproval formed around the Soviet Union because while the coalition soldiers were dying in Kuwait, Moscow talked about a 'political decision.'

"Let us suppose that Moscow did not want to upset its relations with the Arabs. But most Arab countries condemned the Iraqi aggression. Thus, it is incorrect to say that the former Foreign Minister, Shevardnadze, was pro-Western and pro-American, while Yevgeny Primakov was on the side of the Arabs. Primakov's mission looked like an attempt at salvaging the Hussein regime.

"It turned out that Shevardnadze, the most consistent advocate of new political thinking, could not resist the onslaught of the conservatives. Instead of initiating the idea of an international coalition to dislodge Saddam from Kuwait, the Soviet Union surrendered the initiative to President Bush who started real implementation of the doctrine of a new world order. This new order has successfully demonstrated that violence will be punished and no aggression will stand.

"However, American society was also split along foreign political lines, although in a different way than Soviet society. The Republicans said that the American mission was to restore justice. Justice was restored, Kuwait was liberated and the GIs were going home, true to President Bush's promise. The United States was not going to spill American boys' blood for the sake of the dictator's ouster. After all, there was international law to be honoured.

"The Democrats pointed that this stance was not moral. President Bush had equalled Saddam to Adolf Hitler and this idea was heavily propagated among the Iraqi people. They started to hope that finally the dictatorship would be destroyed. The dictatorship was never destroyed. Bush who called on the Iraqi people to struggle against the tyrant abandoned the Iraqis helpless before the military machine of Saddam Hussein. After the war was over, Saddam launched large-scale punitive operations against the rebels.

"If the United States marched into Baghdad and toppled Saddam, there would have been an unprecedented international outcry, of course. But according to this logic, during World War II the Allies should have stopped by the borders of Germany. Fortunately, they had not and today mankind is grateful to the nations which defeated fascism in its nest, in particular, to the United States, the territory of which had never been occupied by Hitler, but which nevertheless sent its troops to fight fascism across the ocean.

"I am not calling for occupation of Iraq. Everything could have been ac-

Saddam Hussein: defeated but not destroyed

Photo from Newsweek (USA)

complished without breaking any promises or laws. Saddam Hussein was morally defeated.

"Representatives of the Iraqi opposition forces from Communists to fundamentalists convened in Lebanon when the Gulf war was in its peak and agreed that Saddam Hussein had to be removed and a democratic regime set up. This could have been the basis of a coalition government. The Americans occupied twenty percent of the Iraqi territory – the whole Southern Iraq. Then a democratic coalition government should have been formed in the occupied parts of Iraq and all members of the coalition should have recognized this government as the only legitimate government of Iraq and called on the Soviet Union to do the same. A liberation army should have been created from POWs and volunteers and promptly armed. The new leadership should have been given an opportunity to coordinate the activities of all anti-Saddam forces, including Kurds and Shiites. After that the government and its army could have started to move against Baghdad – a legitimate government supported by the people would have been liberating its country.

"Unfortunately, the Americans lacked the political vision to arrange things this way. The war was a brilliant piece of action as far as the technical side is concerned. As a result, however, the brilliant victory yielded a very shaky peace. The Kurdish problem in the north of Iraq has become very grave indeed. International forces had to step in in order to prevent the Kurds from being exterminated. Meanwhile the regime cracked down on the rebel Shiites in the south of the country. There is no certainty that Saddam Hussein would volunteer to surrender his power to democratic institutions. If Iraqi Kurds continue their struggle for independence, the neighbouring countries, in particular Turkey, may support this struggle so as finally to become free of the Kurdish presence in their territories. Iran may support the Shiite rebels in the south. Chances are that the Palestinian problem will seem a Sunday school compared to tensions in Iraq.

"The United States and its politicians are dominated by the doctrine of political realism. According to this doctrine, the role of the world community is to punish the aggressor. A crisis appears, the international community settles it and steps aside without interfering in the internal affairs of any party to that crisis. This is also known as crisis management. In the beginning of the 1930, power in Germany was seized by people similar to the power-hungry forces which are serrying their ranks in the Soviet Union. Meanwhile the international community thought the Germans could define their fate on their own. But the Germans defined their fate in a way that cost the world millions of lives and no end ot suffering.

"I am not an advocate of the crisis management approach. I am not an advocate of the crisis prevention tactics. Fascism in Germany could and should have been prevented.

"The Soviet Union is a country where forty-six Chernobyl-type nuclear power stations can go up in flames, a country possessing tremendous stockpiles of chemical and nuclear weapons. As a result of an internal conflict in the USSR, even a chance atomic attack against a nuclear power station, the whole world can be brought to the verge of the ultimate catastrophe. Will anyone survive in America or Japan if a dozen of Chernobyls go out of control in the USSR?

"The task of the world community as I see it is to pull Russia out of the crisis and save it. Otherwise mankind will have to pay even more dearly than it had paid in the past. Healthy forces in the Soviet Union want to return the USSR into the family of civilized nations, to make their country a prosperous democracy. But there are other forces as well, which want another Cold War and fear that a Soviet rapprochement with the West may mean the loss of independence for the USSR. Naturally, the West should be assisting the healthy forces, not the conservative obscurantists.

"Unfortunately, the West has assumed the position of a passive on-looker. What is happening in the USSR is nothing more than an interesting show for the West. As a politologist, I deem it my duty to bring it home to the West that an explosion in the Soviet Union will leave no country unaffected. I want to prove that the Soviet Union's return to the international family is the common cause and concern, not only the ambition of Gorbachev or Shevardnadze or Yeltsin.

"Speaking of all this, I do not mean economic aid which keeps vanishing into thin air. The best Western economists should now join in the effort of helping the Soviet Union to create an infrastructure that would be able to rationally utilize Western assistance. The West must help remove obstacles facing Soviet reforms. The talk about the Soviet people being free to define their fate is simply impermissible. We must step in and act. That is how I see the lessons of the Gulf war as applied to the Soviet Union."

Dmitry Zgersky

Alexander Pushkin Institute of the Russian Language

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"Long live the King"?

Yugoslavs are considering the advantages of monarchy

As it searches for new forms of statehood, Yugoslavia's nation cannot help recalling "the good old days," which necessarily includes monarchy. Half a century of anti-monarchist propaganda has not been enough to rout the popular sympathy (or at least interest) for monarchy. The slogan "We want a king!" is very often heard at meetings and demonstrations in Belgrade.

The heir to the Yugoslavian throne, Crown Prince Alexander Karageorgevich who is now settled in London, is openly enthusiastic about the reports of growing pro-monarchist sentiments. The son of King Peter II who ruled the country from 1941 to 1945 when Yugoslavia was declared a republic, Alexander was the king in exile for some time, then served in the British army and is now a successful businessman. Today he is looking with hope in the direction of the land of his ancestors. Alexander is fluent in six languages and wants to study the language of his father too. "To master the Chroatian language is one of my major concerns at present," he told journalists. "I am learning the language intensively and not without success. The Princess is making even more progress."

The Crown Prince is attentively watching the development of the situation in Yugoslavia. He is not only a passive onlooker, though. Recently, Alexander II has presented his own views on the situation in Yugoslavia and his declaration is regarded by many as the heir's political platform.

Yugoslavia, the Prince said, has faced a dramatic crisis: republican leaderships are exploiting nationalist sentiments in order to remain in power. The bloodshed that has already started must be stopped. The future of the Yugoslavian people cannot be disintegration of their country. The Prince offered an original recipe to pull Yugoslavia out of the current crisis. "In the circumstances, he said, there are no politicians who could be unconditionally supported in the country. Constitutional monarchy could be the only reconciliating force, the ultimate symbol of reconciliation. Restoration of monarchy in Yugoslavia would help consolidate this multinational country. Monarchy must be above politics. The King must reign and the government must rule."

Alexander II is going to return to Yugoslavia as King only if most people expressly state their desire to see monarchy restored. "It is more important for the country to see the coronation of democracy, not the coronation of a monarch," he says.

The heir to the Yugoslavian throne is not alone in his desire to return to the land of his ancestors. Other East European ex-monarchs and crown princes are often haunted by similar desires.

The ex-monarch of Romania, Mihai I, has the longest seniority as the ruling king of all the other East European royals. So far he remains the only East European ex-monarch to have attempted to visit his home country. However, the royal attempt at homecoming was frustrated: as soon as his plane landed in the airport of Bucharest, Romanian authorities suggested that His Highness return to Switzerland. For Mihai I this was the second forced departure from Romania. After replacing his father, King Karol II, on the Romanian throne in 1940, he got a one-way ticket to exile from Romanian authorities at the end of December 1947.

Another Balkan ex-monarch, King Simeon II of Bulgaria, became the king at the age of six in 1943 replacing his father King Boris III. Three years later, however, Bulgaria which had transformed from a Nazi ally to a Soviet friend by that time, declined the services of its king.

Leka I, the heir to the throne of Albania, left his country in 1939, two days after his birth. Now he lives in South Africa believing that sooner or later his compatriots will call him back to rule them.

The desires and ambitions of Eastern Europe's ex-monarchs could be ignored as flights of their unbridled fancy, were it not for the frequent voices heard in Eastern Europe advocating the advantages of monarchy. At the time of the painful transition from one social system to another, accompanied by bloody ethnic conflicts and mounting social and economic problems, more and more people tend to display pro-monarchist sentiments.

The advocates of monarchy put forward a number of what they believe to be trump card arguments. First, they argue, monarchy alone can consolidate nations torn apart by conflicts. Monarchy alone can return the lost prestige and identity to the nations. Monarchy alone can convince the rest of Europe that the break-up with Communism is final and irreversible. The most enthusiastic monarchists insist that if monarchies are restored, Yugoslavia, Romania, Albania and Bulgaria will soon become as prosperous as the Scandinavian kingdoms.

If only restoration of monarchy could solve all the problems at one stroke and bring prosperity overnight, 99.9 percent (or more) voters would not hesitate to vote for the ex-kings' return.

Gennady Sysoyev,
our own correspondent
BELGRADE

Monarchists' rally in Serbia *Photo from Time magazine*

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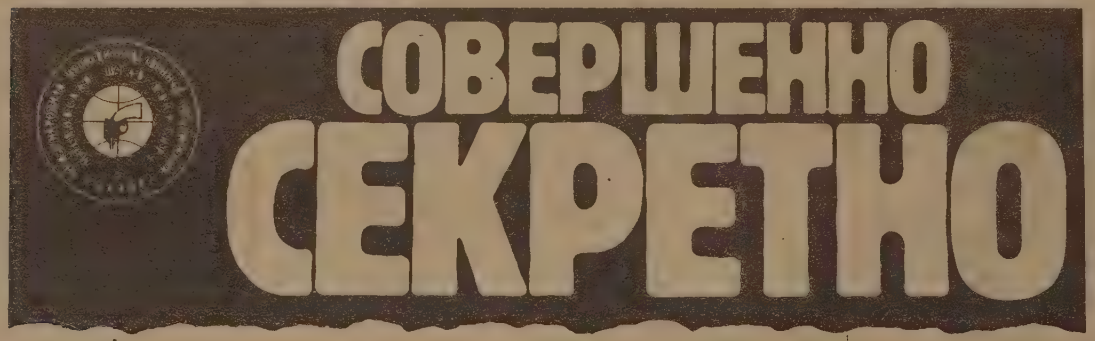

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Can Chilean experience be adopted?

The experience of building capitalism in a South American country

Simon Kordonsky

For decades top Soviet politicians, ideologists, economists and technologists have adopted the experience of other countries in various fields, including atomic secrets and corn growing practices. The "imitative" instinct is deeply rooted in the subconscious notion of the defective nature of our country, its peoples, government system and history. Statesmen, from Lenin to Gorbachev, sincerely believed that "valuable experience" could and had to be imported for building a brighter future. Several years ago some people saw the embryos of communism in Soviet reality. Today everything has changed, according to the rules of mythological thinking, and theorists now see the embryos of capitalism in the activity of self-styled politicians and economists.

Statesmen and new politicians in the numerous Soviets want to find a country whose experience could be used in the transition from levelling distribution to a market economy. Today they are attracted by the Chilean experience in which, as always, they see not factors restricting the application of experience but shops full of food and manufactured products, dynamic economic growth and relative political stability.

Quite recently General Pinochet was mentioned as a symbol of reaction. Today his name is used by politicians of various views in a different context. The pluralism of communist ideology becomes infinite as soon as real power slips from the hands of party officials. A member of the Politburo of the Communist Party and leader of the Moscow Communist Party said recently that he took a keen interest in Chilean experience under Pinochet.

In an attempt to understand Chilean experience the Moscow-based international centre for the study of economic reforms, with the assistance of Adolfo Ibanes University and the Institute of Freedom and Development in Santiago held a week-long seminar in the Chilean capital. Ministers of economics, finance and interior affairs, chairmen of the boards of banks and other functionaries from the numerous governments of the dictatorship period spoke about the goals, results and the course of economic reforms. Four Soviet politicians of the new generation, 12 economists from various research centres in Moscow and two sociologists were probably the first delegation in Soviet years whose trip was arranged by a private person, not the state.

Unique experience

Till 1970 Chile developed in the traditional way of mutual support of the social structure and the nationalized economy with all the evils of such an order – corruption, the low rate of economic growth and unemployment.

After the Allende government took office, Chile found itself in a situation in which only two ways of development were possible. The first, socialist way, would mean large-scale repressions for social restructuring after the model of Cuba and the Soviet Union, possible "internationalist" aid (as in Angola, Nicaragua and Afghanistan) and a planned economy. The second way, which has been adopted in Chile after the 1973 coup, is so far unique in world practice: It can be described as the complete freezing of political life and the provision of initial conditions for privatization of the economy and its inclusion in the world economic community. The concept of economists of the Chicago school invited soon after the coup to put the economy in order was based on the idea of equal opportunities guaranteed by law as distinct from the idea of levelling equality exercised by the state for the sake of attaining goals extraneous to the people.

After 16 years of dictatorship (it was a real dictatorship, especially at the initial stage, accompanied by executions, torture, forced emigration and deportation of thousands of people) the Chilean economy became one of the most dynamic in the world. The overcoming of the aftermath of the 40-year quasi-socialist development required both actions which made the name of Pinochet odious and painstaking economic work for recreating market relations free of political likes and dislikes.

The main task of the Chilean reform was neutralization of the social groups which had turned the state into a source of profit for the copper workers' and dockers' unions. The employers had been deprived of incentives by the tax and customs policy of the government, while the non-unionized poor sections experienced all the burdens of the social disorder.

Reforms carried out by Chicago "boys"

General Pinochet allowed economists to apply in practice their theoretical concepts about an ideal organization of economic processes. Chicago University graduates aged 25 to 35 were in conditions where their actions were appraised only by the end result. The social and political groups whose interests were affected by economic reforms had no possibility to protest in any way. The reforms carried out by Chicago "boys" were united by the common idea of privatization of the economy. A concrete man with his desire for free productive labour became a subject of the Chilean economy revived thanks to these reforms. The state should deal only with affairs which people are unable to settle themselves.

According to liberal economists, people are born honest, reasonable and non-aggressive. In their daily life they are guided by ten commandments and are prepared to take care of others rather than expect others to take care of them. They do not want the state to represent their interests, defending them from the dangers invented by officials. The most terrible thing, according to reformers of the Chilean economy, is the loss of independence and personal initiative, the alienation of personal interests from the individual by the state and its institutions in exchange for concern for public welfare.

During 16 years of its rule the military regime privatized almost the entire economy (with the exception of the copper industry and air transport), external

debts, the health service, education and also (for the first time in world practice) social maintenance. At present 12 private funds, rivalling with one another and rigidly controlled by the state, ensure wage workers a decent standard of living after they retire on pension. The privatization of social maintenance gave a strong impulse to the supply of capital for the Chilean economy. The owners of pension funds invest money in "business," ensuring profit on the capital and incomes for depositors who become a sort of capitalists.

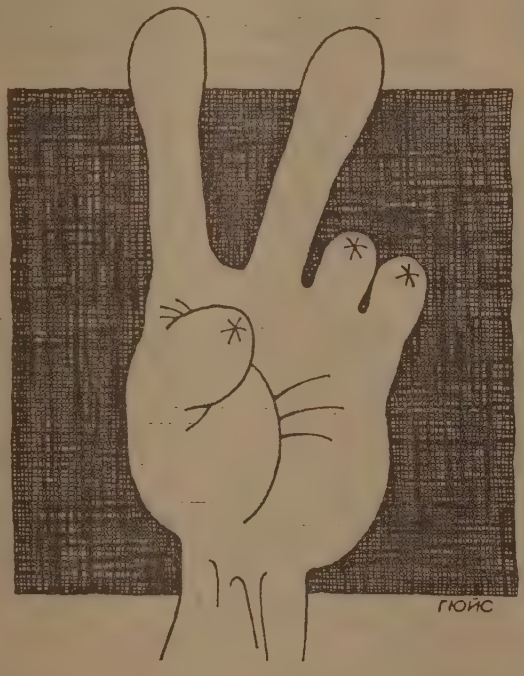
As a result, the degree of social protection of the working people has risen sharply, and by the standards of education, health service, the health of the population and the quality of life in Chile has joined the first 20 countries of the world community. After that it is difficult to speak about the social protection of the working people as the principal achievement of socialism. On the contrary, as a result of state concern for education, the health of people, secure old age and happy childhood, crowds of illiterate and sick people appear while old men with defective children go out begging at the crossings of dirty streets.

Distinctions

The experience of the Chilean counter-revolution is very interesting. It is the most successful attempt to modernize the economy in a country affected by socialist changes. No wonder that Soviet politicians and especially high-ranking army officers began to show interest in what has been done in Chile. It is equally natural that the complex theoretical propositions and refined practical actions of the Chicago "boys" are not very clear to them. What is more clear to them is how General Pinochet ensured possibilities for constructive activity of the theorists who, as fate willed it, became practical workers. To what extent can Chilean experience be used in our country and under what conditions? Bitter experience shows the corn does not grow north of the polar circle, while the imported machines are broken by our inefficient workers.

Chile is a small country with a population of 13 million. In spite of obvious racial and ethnic distinctions, the people of the country consider themselves Chileans first of all. Chile does not have a military-industrial complex. Nor does it have the multi-tier system of territorial and branch management as in the USSR. Owing to such a system the attempts to modernize the Soviet Union, undertaken for decades, have failed so far. Chile did not have a multi-stage restructuring of the social pattern known as class struggle and the suppression of social groups, republics and whole nationalities. As distinct from the USSR, Chile retained institutions of private ownership, appropriate legal relations and the traditional social structure with social groups which have natural private enterprise interests. Properly speaking, the Pinochet regime relied on these groups in its reforms. The Chilean army is highly professional and is not involved in politics, while its generals and admirals are not corrupted by privileges.

The similarity between Chile and our country lies only in the disastrous consequences of socialist management. As distinct from Chile, the Soviet Union does not have the economists who graduated from Chicago University. The economic advisers of the Union and republican governments know the market economy from the textbook of Samuelson and the economy of their own country from the textbook "Political Economy," the first edition of which was approved by Stalin himself.



Drawing by Gennady Zhivutsky

The Soviet army is thoroughly politicized and ideologized and is not professional on the whole, which is considered almost its chief merit. The high army commanders are depraved by the regime of secrecy of both the methods and results of their activity and by the fact that for the same of "maintaining the army's fighting efficiency," the leadership disregarded their failures, mistakes and setbacks.

Priority measures

Some of the urgent problems are impossible to solve now because our country has gone too far along the path of socialist changes. It is perhaps necessary first to raise a professional and depoliticized army, train economists and sociologists and give them full knowledge of what is impossible to do in the Soviet Union. Only with this knowledge can politicians of the next generation begin to free people of state paternalism and mythologems of the world socialist order. We should live till that time, survive the present conflicts in which the elements of socialism, from democrats to diehards, neutralize each other in the rivalry for posts in the administrative system which has remained almost intact. Their mutual irreconcilable enmity shows that they originate from one and the same root. Paradoxically enough, only this system preserves some guarantee that none of the groups – products of the socialist order – will gain the upper hand.

The newspaper *Den* (Day) that on seizing power and establishing "order," the army will hand power over to a civilian administration which will further carry out a scientifically grounded modernization of the economy.

An alliance of ministers connected with the military-industrial complex, generals and party bosses, which has been in the making during the last few months, is passing from the stage of fantastic schemes of unbridled publicists into the stage of practical actions, such as joint army and police patrolling, the declaration of the state of emergency and the use of tanks against demonstrators. Are "new times" coming? Megalomania, combined with primitive imitation, produces a comic effect, especially if one looks at the "actors" from aside. Such a possibility is rejected by those to whom this country is dear.

SANTIAGO–MOSCOW

HUMAN RIGHTS

The misadventures of a ghost law

Lev Yelin

The entry and exit law has been passed, but, to many quarters' delight, won't work for quite a while

The passing of the law releases Soviet citizens from confinement to the country's limits which everyone of us living on one-sixth of the planet has been sentenced to automatically by birth. Naturally, nobody ventured to transfer the Soviet people from the "suspect" to the "free" category overnight. They have released us on parole and promised to give unrestricted access to world civilization on January 1, 1993 (when the law is to take effect)... Well, better later than never. Most of the restrictions on exit from the USSR are being lifted. A foreign exit visa in our citizen's passport will relegate the Soviet authorities' permission to its proper place. Even before the year 1993 a person applying for permission to emigrate from the USSR will no longer have to produce an invitation from his relatives – the recepient country's entry visa will suffice.

As is often the case with us, the innovation has not gone without lots of people falling victim to confusion. The visa registration departments and Aeroflot are stormed by the panick-stricken crowds of those who have already been allowed to leave for Israel and in accordance with the Decree of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium of February 17, 1967 handed in their Soviet passports, with the Israeli visa remaining their only identification paper (under the decree, this category of emigrants loses its Soviet citizenship the moment it crosses the border). The old decree is to be called off on July 1, 1991. If these people – of whom there are nearly 200,000 – fail to leave the country before July 1, they will have to queue up for new passports, to have their Israeli visas renewed and their airline tickets exchanged. True, approval of the resolution is also delayed, the date of July 1 is in the air, mishmash and panick are gaining strength.

In all this bustle, one can forget all about the international importance of the newly-enacted law, about it now being easier for Moscow to obtain credits (in Western papers' opinion) and for Bush to manoeuvre Congress into approving a more liberal policy towards the USSR. Incidentally, within days of the Supreme Soviet's resolution the US President declared for handing over to the USSR the new technologies previously withheld from it for fear of them being put to military uses. By this logic, the law, which certain quarters have objected to on the grounds that it would weaken the country, may even add to our military might...

A ghost in parliament

The bill, submitted for its first reading in November 1989, has been known as a ghost bill since then: it was to have been passed right then, in 1989, then at the beginning and then at the end of 1990. Mysteriously, it never found its way into the agenda on any of those occasions, the official explanation being that it was necessary "to finalize it in the commissions," "to give it a heavy editing." After the bill (practically unchanged, by the way) had been submitted to the Union parliament at last, extraordinary things began to happen. Having readily and unhesitantly passed the controversial bill on state security bodies, the MPs went all out to deadlock the entry and exit bill. The work of the conciliatory commission led to a row inside it; the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities in turn fell short of the vote required for passing the compromise option. Finally, Anatoly Lukianov and Ivan Laptev clashed in public on the majority vote issue... It seemed that the bill was doomed to remain a ghost which would, ever after, send chills up the future MPs' spines by howling in the echoing corridors of the Palace of Congresses, the names of its enemies, Sukhov–Kryshkin–Pupkevich and whimpering at the mention of the Supreme Soviet Chairman's name...

Three days later, however, the very same MPs easily passed the bill by an overwhelming majority of votes, with Anatoly Lukianov's obviously well-wishing connivance. The only question at issue was the date of putting the new law into effect – some insisted on July 1, 1992, but the Cabinet of Ministers suggested, at the eleventh hour, January 1, 1993. The latter date is presumably connected with the fact that by early 1993 the Cabinet hopes to make the ruble fully convertible ("the Polish option") which will remove a number of problems – in particular, those going abroad will

Drawing by Sergei Hasabov

be able to buy tickets for hard currency. However, the artificiality of such arguments is obvious – the year 1993 for the Exit Law is reminiscent of Orwellian 1984... Experts do not rule out the prospect of the resolution being revised, and the initial date restored after this autumn's Moscow Human Rights Conference.

Be that as it may, the argument over the date also came to an abrupt end and accord set in. Our parliament voted for the freedoms which from the viewpoint of the primacy of international law should have been granted us a long, long time ago...

Behind the scenes

What happened over those 18 months? Why did accord come on May 20, not earlier or later?

Initially the bill was prepared by the International Affairs Committee, with some deputies of the Legislation, Law and Order Committee taking part. The first variant, I was told at the Supreme Soviet, did not satisfy anyone. Exit restrictions were imposed out of our specific "context" – it was not clear who was to settle the ensuing conflicts and in what ways. Our military-industrial complex, which had enough representatives in parliament to quash the bill at birth, rejected general wordings. The bill offered no solutions to numerous problems of property division between those going abroad and those staying behind. The democratic opposition also had some amendments to propose, but the military-industrial complex was obviously the first to be heard out, otherwise the door on the bill would have been slammed shut.

Then the work on the bill was entrusted to the Legislation, Law and Order Committee and headed by Andrei Sebentsov, 46, Chairman of the Legislation Subcommittee. Although he rarely addresses public meetings and doesn't care much for writing newspaper articles, Sebentsov commands respect in the conservative and democratic camps alike. It is precisely Andrei Sebentsov who drafts the vital legislation on alternative military service and psychiatric aid; the exit law largely owes its existence to him.

A former "searchlight factory" designer, Sebentsov refers to the military-industrial complex as "it." However, some regard him as representative of those in the complex who are working for reasonable reconversion, for an extensive exchange of technologies, for research cooperation with the West.

In November 1990, Andrei Sebentsov made a trip to the US in order to find out the position of the Americans and to see whether they are prepared to waive the Jackson-Vanik amendment. Shortly afterwards he submitted his version of the bill to "all the government departments concerned" and, in his own words, "succeeded in partially easing off tensions and in having the departments budge their hard line a bit."

On December 2, 1990, the bill was brought before the Supreme Soviet on behalf of the two committees, and the fight to include it in the agenda began. How does Sebentsov account for such long birth pangs?

"The obvious idea was to show the West that we've got the bill and are ready to enact it, but that the people do not want it. The implication is that the government isn't to blame, that it can't go against the nation's will... Anatoly Lukyanov tried to create this impression with consummate skill. He is unsurpassed in this respect..." Indeed, the chairman's moves were amazingly precise. Many of the deputies who shared their opinion with *New Times* noted the fact that the bill had been submitted for the second reading by Fyodor Burlatsky, Chairman of the Human Rights Subcommittee, not by Andrei Sebentsov, although the latter had been "closer" to the bill in its concluding stage. Burlatsky, who, as one of my interviewees put it, "brings lofty truths to this world and to the neighbouring galaxies," is to the conservatives like a red rag to a bull. Besides, Burlatsky told the parliament session a few days later that the discussion of the bill had delayed his departure for Holland...

Mysterious note

On May 16, Anatoly Lukianov went into action himself. "I have received a note," the chairman told the session, "asking to share my own attitude to the exit and entry law." (Judging by the tone of the note, it had been written by a "democrat," but the democrats deny their authorship and make all sorts of guesses). Anatoly Lukianov first declared for passing the bill, but then made the following reservation: "I think we had better put it into effect stage by stage and keep the exit quotas for a while..."

The lawyers *New Times* have consulted are unanimous in saying that the exit quotas are nonsense. The flow of those going out of the country can be practically regulated by a shortage of exchange

funds, railway cars, airliners, benzine, delays in issuing passports, etc. That's all. The quotas are to be set by the recepient state, which is also a bad example of democracy, though not contradicting the international law.

This statement by Lukianov had a striking effect: the vote that followed seemed to have spiked all the efforts made by Laptev-headed conciliatory commission.

"I had an impulse," Sebentsov said, "to suggest that those MPs who realized they were being taken in and know who did it should vote 'for', and those who felt they were being taken in but didn't yet realize who did it should abstain. Finally those who thought that the parliament's attitude to the bill was based on the independent attitudes of the MPs should press the 'against' button..."

If some leave, others will be invited...

What was it, then, that turned the situation 180 degrees? Expert reasoning on that score is as follows.

The preparatory commission for this autumn's Moscow Human Dimension Conference has got down to work. Although not as important as the much-coveted invitation to the Seven Nations' Summit, this conference also means a great deal. The preparatory commission is headed by Gennady Yanayev, Vice-President of the USSR. In a memorandum to the commission the USSR Foreign Ministry stressed that the long-awaited passing of the exit and entry law has become an indisputable priority in the run-up to the Moscow meeting. Acording to *New Times* sources of information, the President instructed Yanayev to expedite the passing of the law – with Anatoly Lukianov's active cooperation, to have the law adopted at last and to give the world the impression that it has been an extremely difficult task to accomplish...

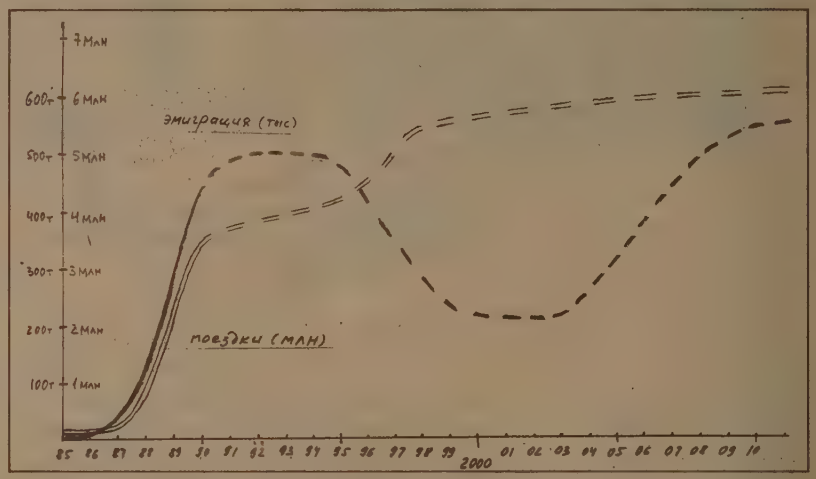
The Soviet leadership's eagerness to secure an invitation to the July summit in London has certainly played a role here. After the adoption of the law, voices have issued from the Western capitals, saying that the political barriers to attending the Moscow Conference have been removed. Presumably, the trip to London has also become a more realistic proposition after the rapid "about-turn" in parliament.

Andrei Sebentsov is inclined to explain all the peripetia of the law by the "inconsistence" of the country's top leadership which showed in Anatoly Lukianov's actions. This view is shared by those who think that the fate of the law was decided by the telephone conversation Gorbachev had with President Bush on those days...

The theory in accordance with which Lukianov's line differed somewhat from that of the President and that the latter had lost sight of the law for a while sounds less convincing. All these, however, are nothing by speculations. The objective factors also included resistance from Soviet government departments which varied in intensity and which manifested itself in certain deputies' panic fear of what the opening of the country's borders might bring and in the alarmist documents submitted by the Cabinet of Ministers in February and April, 1991.

thousand people a year will go out to work on contract..."

The Social Strategy Research Centre has arrived at analogous figures. In our own Foreign Ministry I was told that Sweden, Austria, the FRG, Denmark and Canada were going to tighten immigrant admission rules; that neighbouring Finland sees no reason why it should receive more than the 200,000 a year it does now and would rather help the USSR to create jobs at home than risk the collapse of its social



114,200 people left the USSR on private trips and 6,100 to set up permanent residence abroad in 1985. In 1990, the figures were 3,448,000 and 453,000 respectively. Deputy Andrei Sebentsov gives his own forecast for the next 20 years which differs considerably from the Cabinet of Ministers' alarmist predictions

The Cabinet warns: unrestricted exit is dangerous to our budget

According to the Cabinet, the nation will have to pay through the nose for the making of passports, an increase in the numerical strength of the border guard troops, in customs, consulate service and visa registration departments' staffs. Aeroflot demands money on increasing its aircraft fleet and hard currency from the state budget, because "an increase in the number of Soviet airline passengers going abroad will oust foreign tourists from Aeroflot routes." The Ministry of Railways reports on the need "to import 500 passenger and dining cars and luggage vans a year" (incidentally, restaurant cars are not included in our outgoing trains – the Ministry of Railways is obviously solicitous of those who stay behind).

The Casbinet predicts an appalling rise in emigration figures: "As many as 1.5–2 million Soviet citizens are prepared to emigrate immediately and another 5–6 million contemplate emigration."

"Who needs them," Sebentsov responds to that. "No more than 30–100 infrastructure; that prosperous Switzerland plans to play host to no more than 25-30 thousand Soviets – tourists even. The latter will have to prove first and foremost that they have the money to pay while in the host country. With businessmen it is different: the country's door is always wide open to them.

The USSR Foreign Ministry has reached the following agreement with the US State Department for the period until the law takes effect: the Soviet side will not regard as emigrants those who have left for the USA temporarily and found a sponsor (a company interested in them or simply relatives prepared to keep them). There have turned out to be rather many of such people still waiting for permission to go out and take up permanent residence abroad.

On the other hand, after the law has taken effect Soviet immigrants in the US will find it hard to keep their "political refugee" status. The loss of this status is fraught with complications. To illustrate, immigrants from Poland, Hungary and the CSFR who have lost the refugee status recently are compelled to return home from America unless they have already been granted US citizenship and unless their

professions are in demand on the labour market...

It is not ruled out, however, that the Americans may come to regard our internal refugees – say, Armenians fleeing to Russia from Azerbaijan – as political refugees. The high degree of the republics' sovereignty will give them reason to say that many of once domestic problems are now part of each republic's relations with the outside world.

Andrei Sebentsov refers to the statistics quoted by the Cabinet (and probably intended as points of departure for legislators in working out the procedure of putting the exit law into effect stage by stage) as "average ceilings" meant on the whole to stir up public indignation.

"The deputies confuse millions with billions, and those who compile statistical reports make use of that and set forth the problem in a language which is next to unintelligible. The total expenditure to be incurred by the new law within the next five years is estimated at 11.8 billion rubles and 7.2 billion convertible rubles. I have checked these figures myself on the basis of the Cabinet's own calculations and arrived at entirely different results – 1.7 billion rubles and 105 million dollars. This takes care of all the ruble expense even if we presume that each passport costs 35 rubles. As to 105 million dollars, it is not a sum to agitate the parliament over..."

Says Yuri Reshetov, chief of the Administrative Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "At Western estimates, Soviet experts working abroad will send home up to 10 billion dollars a year. This is to compensate for the above-mentioned 105 million dollars..."

Expert hen killers

I asked Sebentsov why the Cabinet was going, as already pointed out in parliament, to set the cost of a passport at 1,000 rather than 35 or even 100 rubles.

"We are very good at killing hens which hatch golden eggs. Aeroflot's and the Ministry of Railways' desire to solve their problems at the expense of those going abroad is an example of that. Why can't the Uralvagonozavod (Wagon Factory) stop making tanks and start making railway cars at last?"

The resolution of the USSR Supreme Soviet gives the Cabinet of Ministers two weeks in which to draw up proposals for a stage-by-stage implementation of the Law. It has come to *New Times'* knowledge, however, that many in the Cabinet are opposed to that, there is the danger of this resolution not being fulfilled on the grounds that the press might object against some articles of the law being put into effect before others. Second, quite a few members of the Cabinet claim that the articles ready for taking immediate effect do not contradict the resolution of the USSR Council of Ministers of August 28, 1986, now in force...

Rudolf Kuznetsov, chief of the Visas and Registrations Administration under the USSR Ministry of the Interior, takes a different view.

"The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights says that restrictions on the freedom of movement and on the freedom to choose the place of residence may be imposed by law only. The Resolution of 1986 is not a law..."

Kuznetsov is all for putting the law into effect stage-by-stage "if only for moral reasons." Besides that, the Visas and Registration Administration will finally have clear-cut legal guidelines to go by and will no longer have to resort to the "rule of thumb" in deciding cases.

What have they adopted, as a matter of fact?

There are no grounds for idealizing Soviet legislature, the new law is far from impeccable. Most of its faults, however, come from us still being largely cut off from the outside world, and from our poverty.

The fine-sounding article on "providing pensions and medical service to the citizens who have gone abroad" will, as likely as not, turn out to be hollow unless there are relevant bilateral interstate agreements. In Article 15, "The Property Status of the Persons Going Abroad to Take up Permanent Residence There," the mention of housing was excluded after heated debates from the phrase "are entitled to keep, on the territory of the USSR, their property as well as sums of money, securities and other valuables deposited in Soviet banks on the City Soviets' firm insistence. If those who leave keep their empty flats here, where shall we accommodate the Muscovites who need rehousing? Stankevich, Deputy Chairman of the Moscow Soviet exclaimed. Lawyers are still to look into all the aspects of the problems involved. Take a cooperative apartment or a private house – do these fall into the "housing" or "property" category?

Article 11 is a barrier to those who haven't done their tour of duty in the army and who are still call-up age. This looks to be one of the sacred cows hurting which would mean dooming the whole thing.

Finally, the habitual "secrecy." A citizen of the USSR can be temporarily refused a passport and the permission to leave the USSR if he possesses knowledge of what constitutes classified information..." The maximum period for which the exit permit may be denied on these grounds is set at five years. This period, however, may be extended by a commission formed by the Cabinet of Ministers of the USSR.

A citizen denied a passport on the grounds of the "secrecy clause" may appeal to the commission of the Cabinet of Ministers which is obliged to respond within three months and then to court.

Such commissions already exist at all the ministries and the Cabinet's commission will hardly differ much from them in its liberalism and its composition, I am afraid. Besides, if a dispute goes before the court of law, "the composition of the expert commission shall be determined following the procedure established by the Cabinet... Court hearings of such cases shall be held no more frequently than every three years."

Liberal lawyers' hopes that the state would take the trouble to explain why it deprives the citizen of one of his basic rights have been dashed. The departments hold their ground – and firmly so.

The law stipulates in no uncertain terms that the administration and military unit commanders should inform citizens of the restrictions they will come up against when they get down to this or that job; before one is allowed access to classified information, one should be offered to sign a contract of his own free will.

In experts' opinion, it would pay to start making such contracts as soon as possible, without waiting for 1993. If thoroughly thought-out, such an arrangement will help avoid numerous collisions. However, the enterprises of the military-industrial complex proceed from the following logic: who will want to work at a munitions factory if explained in advance that the door now open to all will remain closed to him? The benefits and bonuses which looked attractive until recently have now lost their appeal. The military-industrial complex may be left without its best brains.

"The problem of benefits ought to be given special attention," Rudolf Kuznetsov says. "The state must compensate a citizen for what it takes away from him."

Kuznetsov is of the opinion that the Cabinet will be in no position to by-pass the problem; and what about those who have already been given access to classified information but are unwilling to sign the contract in the period of transition, before the law takes effect?

* * *

Against the background of the chorus of "conservative" and "democratic" comments on the new law, let us heed the voice of a down-to-earth pragmatist.

Rudolf Kuznetsov: "In principle, any administrative measure can be taken on the grounds of this law. Everything will depend on political mood."

No laws, it seems, will give us a hand in bearing this cross...

Patient of Ward 603

The former state and party leader of East Germany, Erich Honecker, smuggled out of Germany two months ago on board of a Soviet military plane and now undergoing treatment at a Moscow hospital grants his first interview since he resigned in the autumn of 1989

The lucky journalist was the Moscow correspondent of the ADN news agency **Wolfgang Szusgien.** Here is his story.

German journalists accredited in Moscow have not stopped efforts to interview Honecker ever since he first appeared in Moscow in March this year. We have been writing letters, calling up various Soviet authorities. A week ago we were informed that an ADN reporter and a camera crew (the interview was videotaped) would be accepted in the branch of a Moscow clinic situated in the Sokolniki Park.

Why did Honecker break his eighteen-month silence? Why has he decided to meet a reporter representing the former official news agency of the GDR?

Erich Honecker prepared a statement for the press in which he expressed indignation at the recent arrests of the former leaders of Eastern Germany: Premier Willi Stoph, Defence Minister Heinz Kessler, Chief of Staff Fritz Streletz and member of the National Defence Council Hans Albrecht. However, I believe that the choice of the news agency has not been decided by Honecker, but by the supreme Soviet authorities. Honecker's old sympathies for the former official news agency have hardly had anything to do with the choice. It is possible, though, that Honecker would have been even more reluctant to grant an interview to any other agency. My opinion was confirmed by Erich Honecker's wife, Margot, who said that "ADN was not what it used to be. It was not giving as much objective information as it used to."

Six leather suitcases

We were allowed to get to the Sokolniki hospital along a narrow road leading through the park. The hospital was a modern six-storey building very different from what ordinary city hospitals are like in the Soviet Union. Evidently the patients of the Sokolniki clinic belong to the privileged castes of Soviet society.

However, I did not notice any special security precautions. We were allowed to pass through the checkpoint immediately after we produced our accreditation cards. A nurse took us to the sixth floor, we passed through a number of doors and finally found ourselves in the room of the head doctor of the department of cardiology. I noticed an April issue of *Berliner Morgenpost* on a glass shelf.

Honecker's doctor told us the patient was in a fairly good condition, but would remain at hospital nonetheless. A couple of minutes later the doctor was hesitantly knocking on the door marked 603. The door opened. Standing on the threshold was the former leader of the East German state of which I was a citizen only a year ago, a man who once wielded unlimited power. I could see that now he was nothing but an old sick man, a pensioner who had lost all power, found himself in virtual conviction and knew nothing about what was going to happen to him. He underwent two kidney surgeries. The doctors were worried about his heart condition...

Before the interview began, the Honeckers showed us around their accommodation: a dining room, a bedroom, a small sitting room with a TV set and a VCR. A cardboard box contained a pile of *Frankfurter Allgemeine, Neues Deutschland, Suddeutsche Zeitung* plus fresh issues of *Der Spiegel* and *Stern*. When we came to see the bedroom, I noticed six leather suitcases standing by the big double bed. "These suitcases is all we've got now," said Margot Honecker bitterly. "We have not been able even to unpack in the past eighteen months."

I had never met Honecker personally before. I only saw him speaking on television or saw his pictures in newspapers and magazines. On the day of the interview I saw for the first time that Honecker was also a flesh-and-blood person like myself. He displayed remarkable self-control and was quite cheerful. His answers were interesting and lively. During the interview his wife stayed by his side, taking part in the conversation, helping her husband to find the right words. I felt somewhat uneasy and at the same time curious.

Settling in Chile for good?

How did the former East German leader feel in Moscow?

"It is for the first time that I am in a political asylum," Honecker answered. "This asylum was granted at my own request, because as long as the arrest warrant issued in my name and remains in force, I have no intention to return to Germany... I have received political asylum in the Soviet Union and I am immensely grateful to Soviet comrades for this. They referred to the fact that the Soviet Union traditionally granted asylum to German Communists. This was so during the time of the Nazi dominance, and today, on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the German attack against the USSR, the Soviet Union is providing a convincing proof that it remains a true friend of all progressive people."

At the prime time of their rule *Photo from Stern (Germany)*

Honecker remains convinced that the path along which he had led his nation and the choice he had fought for are the only right ones. He is proud of the socialist achievements in the former GDR. The current rise of unemployment in the eastern part of Germany, he believes, is the best confirmation of the correctness of his policy. Looking back at the past, wouldn't he like to change anything in his course? Honecker was reluctant to answer this question and the question concerning the prospects of Soviet-German relations. Frau Honecker was the first to respond. "I know exactly what you are interested in," she said significantly, obviously believing that I was going to ask Honecker about his attitude to Mikhail Gorbachev. Honecker has never liked the Soviet leader. The policy of perestroika started by Gorbachev in the Soviet Union spelled the end of the Honecker era. Today, however, Gorbachev is the only person to have taken care of him.

Honecker insists that the order to open fire on the trespassers on the border separating the Germanys was "a border protection measure carried out fully in compliance with international law." "What the papers are writing now," Frau Honecker added," is a pack of lies... We are seriously alarmed by the witchhunt spearheaded against Honecker and his friends and comrades... Everybody's been smeared with mud..." Said Honecker: "All these reports... are of course only a part of a large-scale campaign to eliminate the good memories about the German Democratic Republic."

Honecker still lives in a world of his own, considering himself a dissident persecuted for his political convictions. Unification of Germany has rendered senseless all his life, the fruits of years of hard work. Now, wanted by German justice authorities, Erich Honecker has to seek political asylum in Moscow.

When asked whether his departure from Germany could be considered a flight from Germany, Honecker gave a virtually positive answer. This admission surprised me, to say the least. Before, the former East German leader's appearance in Moscow was ascribed to the need of better medical treatment. However, Margot Honecker backed up the old version when she said that despite all the care and attention, the Soviet military hospital at Beelitz lacked the necessary computer equipment. At the same time, Honecker and his wife did not make any attempt to deny that they had no inclination to get imprisoned for a second time as the German authorities intended them to. Honecker was arrested for the first time in the autumn of 1989 just as he stepped out of the government hospital of Charité in Berlin. He spent a day and a half in custody and then an Evangelical priest sheltered him in his house.

At the end of the conversation Honecker dropped a strange hint that he wanted, health permitting, to go to Chile and stay there for "a considerable time." His daughter, who had married a Chilean, and his grandchildren live there. He has a lot of Chilean friends whom he accommodated in the GDR during the Pinochet rule...

An hour later we said good-bye to the Honeckers. However, I believe that many journalists will continue seeking some extraordinary information from that more than ordinary man.

Recorded by
Konstantin Isakov

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The new law on the KGB

The law On State Security Bodies in the USSR, enacted by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR without a murmur grants the KGB an unjustified leeway

Ernst Orlovsky

It would be a mistake to regard the newly-adopted law On State Security Bodies in the USSR as a step back. The point is that the KGB has hitherto exercised practically all the powers stipulated by this law, and perhaps many others. Previously not reflected in any legal document, these powers relied on numerous unpublished – confidential or classified – decrees by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR resolutions and orders of the USSR government and a host of bylaws issued by the KGB itself. In November 1990, the Committee for Constitutional Compliance of the USSR, ruled that the existence and application of the enactments which were not open to public and pertained to citizens' rights and responsibilities ran counter to the USSR Constitution and this country's international commitments. This notwithstanding, the Committee for State Security of the USSR continued using these rights in practice, and the law seems to have added little new to the actual state of affairs.

All things considered?

The fact that the list of powers of the KGB finally saw the light is a positive phenomenon. A good sign: the provision contained in Paragraph 10 of Article 11 of the said law made it perfectly clear: "the personnel of state security bodies shall not be bound by the decisions of political parties," while previously just the opposite was stubbornly stated. But at this point the positive thrust of the law fizzles out.

The resolution on the enforcement of the law has fixed a deadline – December 31, 1992 – for the cancellation of the government resolutions and orders and bylaws of the KGB that contradict the new act. This implies that the resolutions and instructions which have hitherto remained classified will remain valid for another 18 months, thus granting the KGB the rights and authority which by far exceed those stipulated by the new law, a rather favourable legal framework for the Soviet secret police.

The monument to Dzerzhinsky in front of the KGB building in Moscow

The KGB's terms of reference are formulated in the law in such a way that it is empowered to intrude in practically all spheres of public life. For instance, the KGB is expected to provide the supreme bodies of power and administration not only with information required for the fulfilment of tasks related to state security issues and defence policy, but also intended "for the fulfilment of tasks connected with... social and economic advance, scientific and technological progress, as well as with foreign policy and foreign trade." Indeed, the tail wags the dog!

As far as the efforts to combat crime are concerned, state security bodies are supposed to deal with the crimes that are referred by law to the terms of reference of the KGB itself, but also with "terrorism and organized crime which affect state security interests." But under existing legislation, "terror" is exactly the category of crime directly referred to the terms of reference of state security bodies. Then why make a special mention of "terrorism" in the law on the KGB?

By using the definition "terrorism," the authors of the law seem to mean something more vague that "terror." The law fails, however, to clarify this notion. (Similarly, it remains unclear what the KGB Chairman Kryuchkov meant to say when he used the word "sabotage" in his TV interview, while the law contains no provisions with regard to sabotage.) The subsequent articles of the law indicate that in its efforts to combat crime the KGB is not limited by its broad terms of reference and may at times virtually substitute, when deemed necessary, any other law enforcement bodies in the USSR. The law empowers the KGB to handle economic crimes (Paragraph 10, Article 14), to keep in remand cells and "other premises" (?!) not only the persons detained by state security bodies but also those detained and arrested by militia, prosecutors and courts of law and even those found guilty in the light of the provisions of Paragraph 12 of Article 14. True, an addition is made: "in cases stipulated by law." But since there is no such law, any classified resolutions, orders and instructions may continue to be applied in future. Paragraph 13 of Article 14 empowers the KGB with control functions with regard to not only bodies of administation, the Ministry of the Interior, the Defence Ministry and the Armed Forces, but also public associations.

Ernst ORLOVSKY, a mathematician and lawyer, off-staff expert of the Human Rights Committee at the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, and one of the most prominent human rights activists, who fully shared the views of A. Sakharov, R. Pimenov and S. Kovalyov.

I believe Paragraph 16 of Article 14 is the most dangerous provision containing in the law, which makes the KGB the master of all archives pertaining to its activity, who will be free to determine the procedure of custody and use thereof. The law does not specify any deadlines with regard to the transfer of documents to state archives, which in actual fact entitles the KGB to keep its documents secret for eternity, without disclosing them even to the Supreme Soviet, or destroy them at its discretion.

"Official warning"

Paragraph 11 of Article 14 of the law on the KGB legalizes the previously established by the classified resolution of December 25, 1972 the KGB's right to issue "official warnings to citizens on inadmissibility of performing unlawful acts." This provision seems to sound absolutely normal: any citizen and any organization is free to warn anyone about anything, provided such a warning is a friendly gesture which does not entail any legal consequences. But the law fails to determine any legal consequences. Then what is the purpose of stipulating such a right in a legal document and, prior to that, issue a special classified order?

My personal experience shows that such warnings are usually followed by measures infringing upon the rights of the person "warned." For instance, when in 1973 I did not try to conceal my indignation at the campaigns of slander against Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Andrei Sakharov and Amnesty International, I was "officially warned" by the KGB, and in December 1973 the management of the research institute where I worked, under the direct pressure from the KGB, halved my salary, motivating the decision by my "inclination for lauding of an ideology alien to our society."

The most suprising thing about this is that such unlawful acts are being perpetrated against other persons, and, what is more, they are legalized in a new document.

Under Paragraph 3 of Article 14, the KGB is empowered to exercise control of postal, telephone and other communications without a permission from a prosecutor, who should be notified afterwards. Neither any mention is made about the deadlines of submission of such notifications nor the powers of the prosecutor nor the liability of the KGB personnel for the application of such measures. The circumstances permitting such measures are outlined in a very contradictory and vague way.

Paragraph 2 of Article 14 legalizes the KGB's large-scale use of off-staff personnel recruited on a covert basis, the so-called "informants" and the "grasses," imposing no limits on the scope of this activity.

Under Paragraph 7 of Section I of Article 13 and Paragraph 2 of Section III of Article 13, the KGB is entrusted with the task of "keeping record of the persons who have committed crimes," irrespective of any terms of limitation, expunge previous convictions, etc. The constitutional nature of this norm is very doubtful as well.

In accordance with Paragraph 16 of Section I of Article 13, the KGB has the right to issue legal acts compulsory for execution by state security bodies, bodies of power and state-owned enterprises and even public organizations. The law fails, however, to mention that such acts should be made public.

The above are by far not all the provisions of the newly-adopted law which may serve as a basis for unrestricted arbitrariness.

The text of the law abounds in complicated and vague phrases. The lawmakers profusely juggled with similar terms and definitions without drawing any clear distinctions between them. For instance, "terror" and "terrorism" referred to above; "a legislative act" and "act of the legislature;" "a serviceman" and "a person serving military duty in the troops," and so forth. Such instances only complicate and even make incomprehensible the message of the provisions of the law. In a word, the new law creates much more problems rather than solves them.

We call on the Supreme Soviets in each Union republic to submit proposals to the Constitutional Compliance Committee of the USSR intended to verify the constitutionality of the law on state security bodies in the USSR and its compliance with the latter's international treaties.

We call on the Constitutional Compliance Committee of the USSR to urgently consider such a proposal, and should it not be tabled, then make an assessment of the said law on its own.

Unless this law is revised, we shall only be paying lip-service to the idea of the law-governed state.

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For Fatherland, or for Stalin?

Alexander Zolotaryov

He who has tasted the freedom of war does not remain a slave

They say there is but one truth – the truth of life. However, there is no escaping the fact that there is also the truth of death. For quite a long time, we have not been able to comprehend what they are and we are still having difficulties with either of them. The truth of life and the truth of death are together in peacetime. They dance a macabre waltz in war time.

One would say that is what any war is all about. This is true. But there was one more truth during our own, Great Patriotic War, or, to be more precise, it was not exactly truth, but truth-lie. The truth-lie of the regime, not the Fatherland. The clearest case of this truth-lie was the battle cry "For Fatherland! For Stalin!" The first part of the battle cry is truth, the other is lie. The lie that is rooted in ignorance, supressed thought and humble mentality. The lie that lives on state-sponsored prejudice. The lie that uses ideological mythology as its primary support.

It is easy to bury the lies insulting to the memory of the Great Patriotic War. The lies can be rationally overcome. But the ideological myths that accompany them are more viable and sticky. During the war, after the war and even today these myths continue to influence a great lot of people.

Lie is more active than truth. However, they were not crying "For Stalin!" all the time during the war (just ask about that some unprejudiced war veterans). And even the full version of the battle cry could not have been louder than the torrent of abuse spewed out by the attacking soldiers. It is easy to presume that the second part of the battle cry had been the fruit of the over-fertile ideology – as fertile during the time of war as it is during the time of peace. In other words, the "For Stalin!" section followed the "For Fatherland!" one. Followed it, not preceeded it.

Was it a shrewd calculation of the war time ideologues or yet another product of the perverted ideological mentality? This does not really matter. What does matter is that lie in the form of a call was feeding on its viccinity to truth and borrowed the strength of truth. The barrier between lie and truth was negligible: a comma or an exclamation mark in writing, a split second's pause in speech. Even today it is difficult to separate the post-pause lie from truth. And this psychological trick was simply unbeatable fifty years ago!

It goes without saying that people do not lie raising for an attack in which they may be killed any second. Besides, the death sprayed with the German fire was intended to give an irreversible character to the blending "For Fatherland! For Stalin!" to make this blending an undisputable and integral whole.

This is not all. The battle cry simultaneously ejected from so many throats was a way to justify the wholesale repressions committed by "the leader of the peoples" and the system

Gorky Park, Moscow, spring of 1991

Photo by Vladimir Bogdanov

which had turned the country into one huge killing ground. The battle cry "For Fatherland! For Stalin!" was intended to supress the barely audible "peaceful" cries coming from the "37s," as the Russian soldier and writer, Victor Nekrasov who died in emigration in France in 1987, once defined many of the prewar socialist years.

The "thirty-sevens" go to war

It was impossible to suppress the "37s" during the war. They had infiltrated the Great Patriotic War, the beginning of which meant the beginning of yet another popular tragedy. The beginning of a new tragedy in the history of the people doomed to be the first to carry the burden of socialism.

Shortly before Germany "unexpectedly" attacked the Soviet Union, the "37s" decimated the army chain of command. They turned the army into a weak gathering of troops unable to defend its own land, to say nothing of crushing the enemy in its own territory.

The "37s" herded hundreds of thousands of Red Army troops into colossal encirclements and all the way into SS extermination camps.

With Stalin as their mouthpiece, the "37s" refused the right to compatriots' memory and sympathy to Soviet POWs.

The "37s" infiltrated the armies with all kinds of informers, and "special service officers" who were only too ready to destroy "insufficiently patriotic" and "insufficiently selfless" officers and enlisted men. The notorious "37s" were tirelessly purging the armies of "enemies of the people" who had intended to disguise themselves with military uniforms and antiquated Mosin rifles.

The "37s" generated what the orthodox thinkers continue to call "the Vlasov betrayal" refusing to see the contradictory motives behind that betrayal.

The "37s" hoisted red banners over cities liberated whatever the cost, in time for October Revolution anniversaries, May Days and Stalin's birthdays. The higher were the heaps of bodies of sacrificed soldiers (cities were to be liberated dead on time, not a day later), the more proudly the red banners flew. "The women will make us more soldiers," the regime grinned viciously into Stalin's puffy moustache.

The "37s" turned the armies that came to Europe as liberators into occupation forces.

Instead of sending Soviet POWs home, the "37s" resettled them – during the war and after it – from SS extermination camps to Stalin's concentration camps. Those who had survived the German captivity had to experience ordeals at home too.

The "37s" who perverted people's souls are guilty of the fact that the remains of many soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the Fatherland remain unburied. No war is over until the last fallen soldier is buried.

The gift of freedom

Political scientist Gassan Gusseynov once noted: "When the witnesses of the Stalin epoch recall it as an epoch of joy and enthusiasm and love for the leader, we must believe them, but with certain reservations.

Interesting, isn't it? One wonders what the reservations are.

"The trick they pulled on us," the scientist goes on explaining, "is that the feelings were really mutual. Stalin intimidated and terrorized, people feared and hated. In the country where people were supposed 'to sing and laugh like children' the blending of intimidation, terrorism, hate and fear was called the 'people's love for the leader.'"

Now let us imagine a person contaminated with the "people's love" coming to the front. What does he feel like? What did peasants feel like – peasants, the body of the army if one can say so? That body of the army, halfdead from Stalin's drive to collectivize agriculture, was exposed to massive indoctrination by that time's mass media and all kinds of war time agitators. There were just too many words. From the text of the Soviet pledge of allegiance to the texts of German leaflets sprayed down from Luftwaffe planes. As they read through German leaflets soldiers could not help wondering just how that scoundrel Goebbels could have known so much of what they did not dare to admit themselves: the "popular" character of the regime, the "happiness" of living under socialism and much more out of real life.

The surprise at the Germans' knowledge then gave way to a feeling of pain from the Germans' venomous observation: the land you are fighting for is not really yours, it belongs to the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to an anonimous mass of "proletarian" administrators. Soldiers did not need German leaflets to form their own impression about what the "collective popular ownership" was worth. However, knowing it all, soldiers could not help thinking about the land. But their line of reasoning was different. The war will be over one day, they thought, after all it cannot rage for ever, and maybe there will be a less harsh land policy.

This is what soldiers thought in the bottom of their souls. It was as natural for them as to plough and to sow to fight for the land, their homes, their families, their Fatherland.

While killing people every second, the war also emancipated people. The war gave freedom to people who had not been free before. One of the facets of the terribly simple truth of life was that freedom was not a gift from the state – the state was not used to making such gifts, but a gift from death. There was no more horrible place than the front line, people were sure they could not be sent to labour camps (on the contrary, yesterdays' convicts could be sent up to the front to beef up the army) and were free to dispose of themselves under whatever strict orders and control. The people were free to decide what they were fighting for.

One does not cry "For Stalin!" alone or subconsciously. But crying "For Stalin!" during an attack is another matter. As soldiers charged forward they ejected that cry as a collective body – all of them: privates who were remiss in real political knowledge, and officers, freethinkers and clear heads. And yet not everybody was fighting for Stalin.

When one hears endless debates about the battle cry "For Fatherland! For Stalin!" (the debates usually focus on the second part of it), one remembers the words of Prince Pyotr Kropotkin: "The people see war as God's punishment and that is why the people are serious about war." The seriousness of the war was not at all in the battle cry "For Stalin!" The seriousness of the war was in the people's determination to destroy evil and to remove the direct threat to their country. Hitler was a greater evil than Stalin and Stalinism.

The victorious people in the dock

Characteristically pragmatic, the "Great Helmsman" realized that the war just could not be won solely in the style of the "37s". Could he really entrust the defence of his, Stalin's socialism to the NKVD, courageous only when it came to hunting for mythical "enemies of the people?" The enemy was a formidable one. It could not be crushed otherwise than by the whole people. It was time to forget one's attitude to the people as

cattle, and to plead with the people asking them to defend the Fatherland, and, logically, the personal power of Joseph Stalin.

To inspire the people to defend the country, Stalin had to bow to them when he issued his famous address to the nation beginning with the words "Brothers and sisters!" For the same purpose Stalin (a student of theology in his youth who later became the High Priest of "scientific atheism") also made a half-bow towards the Church. For the same purpose he relied on the "inspiring examples" of the "non-Red" military leaders, ranging from Alexander Nevsky to Mikhail Kutuzov...

When the war was over and it was time to start counting losses Stalin missed fifteen or twenty million "brothers and sisters." Or perhaps more, who knows?

In the year of the bitter aftertaste of victory it was said that "victors shall not be judged." Thus the artificial "For Stalin!" tried to worm its way over the heartfelt "For Fatherland!"

The victory month of May 1945 brought many people together in the wake of joy ("we've survived!"), shock ("at what price!"), illusions ("life will be better now"). However, the chaotic excitement soon receded. It was gradually revealed how exhausted the nation was. The land which had been pounded with so much metal was exhausted. The people were exhausted by combat, by hard labour in the rear, at Soviet and German camps, at German factories and farms which used Soviets herded out from the occupied parts of the USSR. As for the state, it became only more powerful. It had so many more tanks, combat planes, soldiers! Before the war the state was never so strong.

New waves of repressions started sweeping the country (the external enemy had been defeated, "but the enemy inside was still so strong"). Although the repressions were curtailed somewhat after Stalin's death, they never really stopped. They transformed somewhat and not really very much. Suffice it to recall the brutal crackdowns on the massive protests in many cities where people took to the streets.

People were treated with bullets, rifle butts and police dogs. The victors were sent to the dock. Some of them were executed. It turned out that victors could not only be judged but also shot, exiled to the GULAG like it was under Stalin, forced to emigrate. Do not these post war labours of the system remind one of the "For Stalin!" call?

Is not the echo of the call "For Stalin!" heard in the recent dramas of Vilnius, Tbilisi and Riga?

The war that made humans humane

The war of 1941-45... Isn't is self-evident that this war, among other events, is a source of this country's entire evolution, from the Khrushchevian thaw to today's tentative reforms?

The war was a powerful shake-up. It was a powerful reappraisal of values. In a way the 1812 phenomenon repeated. Russian serfs clad in uniforms returned from the liberated Europe to Russia and changed under the influence of what they saw and experienced there. They changed from within. There was something maturing in them that later broke free in the form of disobedience and uprisings. The objective was always the same: to make life change for the better, to emancipate.

A person who has tasted the deadly freedom of a soldier and the freedom of unending labour (when death seems a welcome deliverance) and who has survived all that becomes emancipated. This is unavoidable. Propaganda becomes less effective and, as a result, it becomes more difficult to turn people into slaves.

This also applies to the clumsy propaganda about the Great Patriotic War. It makes me uneasy to see some war veterans turned into custodians of old ways pronouncing propaganda platitudes. This is no way to be speaking about a war for the Fatherland.

I have the right to such an observation. The right of a man whom the war bereft of his father. A man who is not personally indifferent to the truth and lie of the war. ■

Alexander Lee, a Catholic priest, lived in the United States, where he was the spiritual father of American Koreans. One fine day he crossed the ocean back to the Republic of Korea to settle forever in a village for people affected with leprosy.

Today only old photographs can give an idea of how the Saint Lazarus village looked before Father Alexander came there. It was a godforsaken place of utter poverty and hopeless grief. People shunned the leprosery, fearing to catch the disease and thus endanger their health and nerves.

Father Alexander brought consolation to leprosy patients needed by them no less than drugs and confidence that life must not be wretched even for incurables. Thanks to the efforts of Father Alexander, the entire country learned about the Saint Lazarus village and people felt the need to do something to help the leprosery. Politicians, big businessmen and popular actors made donations to the hospital and came to the Saint Lazarus village in order, overcoming fear, to shake hands with leprosy patients. The Pope and the successive presidents of south Korea paid visits to Father Alexander.

Last year, *New Times* invited Father Alexander to the Soviet Union (No. 15/90). There are over a dozen leproseries in our country. However, no one, except doctors, cares for them. Neither politicians nor workers in the field of arts are concerned about leprosy patients, whereas the Saint Lazarus village receives aid from all over the world. Perhaps with the help of Father Alexander our leproseries will also be included in the system of world charity.

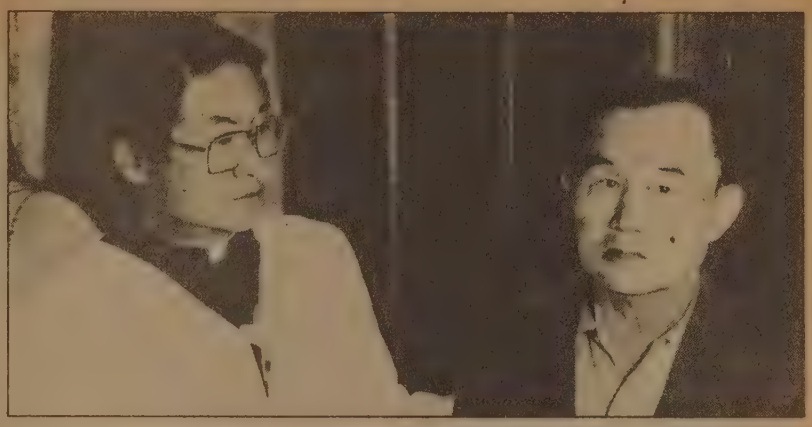
Father Alexander arrived at last. Nikolai Potapov, minister of public health of the USSR, and his deputy Alexander Moskvichev allowed him to visit any leprosery. He chose the one outside Zagorsk, not far from Moscow.

Telephone communication between Moscow and Zagorsk seems to operate worse than between Moscow and Seoul. Moscow asked the local authorities to show the leprosery "to a prominent Catholic priest from the Republic of Korea." Zagorsk officials understood that a high-ranking patient had to be examined. A special ward was prepared and a doctor was waiting for the guest in the reception room.

On learning that it was not a patient, nurses felt anxious and phoned to higher authorities, asking how to meet Father Alexander. However, the director of the lep-

A Soviet leprosery visited by a Korean priest

Aid is likely to follow for Soviet leprosy patients



Father Alexander, left, meets his compatriot among patients in a leprosery near Zagorsk

rosery was away at the moment and the welcome ceremony and an impressive story about the successes of the Soviet health service had to be cancelled. Father Alexander was shown round the leprosery, its dwelling rooms, canteen, consulting wards and a rest room with a list of 31 voters pinned to the door post. Such was also the number of inmates.

The leprosery outside Zagorsk, opened in the 1920s, can admit twice as many patients than now. But, fortunately, the number of people affected with leprosy is constantly dwindling.

The Zagorsk leprosery, just as the Saint Lazarus village, is situated in a beautiful and quiet place. But that is the only similarity between them. The leprosery or, more exactly, "the research laboratory for the immunotherapy of leprosy and immunotropic means with a clinic and experimental production, is as poor as a church mouse or, frankly speaking, the Soviet health service as a whole. Old buildings, squalid furniture, scanty medicines and corridors saturated with unique smells of small local hospitals.

As distinct from the Saint Lazarus village, it is a temporary abode. The patients are treated here for several years and then they are allowed to go home, where they can try to return to a normal life. Young people long to go away from the hospital, whereas elderly people prefer to stay here longer. Though the doctor explains to the relatives that at the given stage a patient is not a hazard to others, people are unable to get rid of fear. This fear deprives patients of human communication and their home. In this case a leprosery seems a refuge saving them from the enmity of the surrounding world. However miserable life in a leprosery may be, it is not much worse than life outside it.

Doctors and nurses said there was nothing special to show to the guest. It was good **they had nothing for show only.** Father Alexander could understand more easily how to help the Soviet leprosy patients. He came to the USSR precisely for this purpose.

On June 5, a charity concert was held in the Saint Lazarus village built by Father Alexander. Famous singers and musicians considered it an honour to sing and play before the leprosy patients. The entire country watched the grand concert, because it was shown on television. The TV administration highly appraised not only the quality of the concert, but also the noble intentions of its organizers. Father Alexander is going to use the takings for assistance to Soviet and Chinese leprosy patients.

Father Alexander with his patients in the Saint Lazarus village

Father Alexander asked our magazine, together with the doctors of the leprosery, to draw up a list of things essential for patients to the sum of roughly 10,000 dollars. New Times will deliver the gift to the Zagorsk leprosery.

According to Father Alexander, German charity organizations, which supply drugs to the Saint Lazarus village, are also prepared to give free aid to Soviet leprosy patients. Will the ministry of public health of the USSR accept this aid? If it agrees, what kind of aid must be given in the first place? New Times is expecting a reply.

Leonid Mlechin

Photos by Vladimir Panov and from Father Alexander's archive

FROM THE XXth CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Introduced by *New Times* analyst **Rostislav Zolotaryov**

The manuscript which follows is not quite usual for this section. It is not a "monument" of political theory and does not contain a clear-cut political concept. What's more, its author, for all the tone of his essay, is not free of bias in his judgements and estimates: he lacks the degree of objectivity characteristic of scientific papers. Nevertheless, the essay qualifies for this section of the magazine being a critical review of the policy pursued by the tsarist government in the Baltic region.

Nikolai Pokrovsky's essay is indeed an "inflammable manuscript" which has never appeared in print and which has waited for its day in the archives. For the day when the vicissitudes of the former empire's history have made it topical again.

Nikolai Pokrovsky's reflections over the former imperial policy are of interest if only for the reason that no lessons have been learned from it. Pokrovsky was a prominent tsarist dignitary, himself a party to the government's policy, and his personal experience was closely intertwined with that of a statesman. The article which follows is largely marked by jingoism, arrogance and prejudice. Nevertheless, criticism of tsarism's home policy prevails.

Nikolai Nikolayevich Pokrovsky spent almost all of his life in metropolitan offices. He served in the Committee of Ministers, the Ministry of Finance and other Ministries. In January-November, 1916, he headed State Control, and was then appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, the tsarist government's last one.

The note which follows was written by Pokrovsky in 1919 for the well-known journalist Lev Klyachko-Lvov. The latter was connected with many former tsarist officials who lived in a "cold and hungry" post-revolutionary Petrograd without any means of livelihood and who had it harder than the other residents of the city. He found a means of supporting former courtiers: an arrangement was made whereby they were paid small emoluments for their memories. The result was a whole collection of manuscripts dated 1919, including a "memoir" by Pokrovsky found in L.Klyachko's papers in the Central State Archives of Literature and Art.

The following text is based on Nikolai Pokrovsky's autograph. It has been prepared for publication, in a slightly abridged form, by **Vladimir Polikarpov,** Cand. Sc. (History).

The imperial policy in Lithuania

Nikolai Pokrovsky (1851–1930)

My links with Lithuania go back many decades: my grandfather, an officer of a horse-drawn artillery unit, billeted there after the 1830 Polish uprising, married the daughter of a local country gentleman, a retired Polish colonel. In those times, the attitude to Russians there was entirely different from that after the 1863 revolt when a marriage between a Polish girl and a Russian was regarded by her relatives as all but high treason. In the 1830s, it was different: according to my grandmother, the country gentlemen's homes were always open to Russian officers – banquets, balls and dinners followed one after another. For their part, the officers welcomed Polish noblemen to their assemblies. Under the circumstance, a marriage between a Russian officer and Polish girl was nothing out of the ordinary.

Our family kept in touch with the Lithuanian relatives for years thereafter. As a child, I often spent summers in the Lithuanian countryside where my grandmother's sister had an estate...

After the suppression of the 1863 revolt, all Polish landed gentry of the Western Region – and Catholic clergy – were labelled as unreliable. There emerged a historically-substantiated theory that Lithuania is a primordial part of Russia, now Polonized and subject to re-Russification. Whereas a proportion of Lithuania is, indeed, populated with Byelorussians, the Kovno gubernia is certainly not a case in point: Catholic Lithuanian peasants have nothing in common with the Russians as far as their origin and culture are concerned. Measures had to be taken, of course, to tie them in to Russian statehood, of course. Unfortunately, those measures were limited to protection from Polonization. Restrictions were imposed on Polish landowning: Poles were forbidden to purchase land property in the Region.

The fight against Polish landowning went as far as extending the privileges enjoyed by Russians and Russian Orthodox believers to Germans and Lutherans. As a result, Germans made cosy nests in the Kovno gubernia.

The restrictions imposed on Polish landowning proved to be counter-productive: the keeping of the land in Polish hands became a patriotic cause and its sale to the Russians was regarded as almost a treachery.

Somewhat later, when a scheme for resettling Russian peasants in Lithuania was conceived, and the Russian Land Bank began to buy up land plots for the purpose, there immediately emerged credit unions which hastened to snatch the land plots offered for sale from the Peasant Bank and to resell them to Lithuanian peasants. Those land purchases for Russian settlers, which produced relatively negligible results, revolted the peasant population against the Russian authorities...

Another target of restrictions was the Catholic Church. Religious tolerance being laid down by law, restrictions were imposed not on the profession of Catholic religion but on the manifestations of Polish and Lithuanian separatism in the Catholic Church. This resulted, however, in restricting the very profession of Catholic religion. It was forbidden, for instance, to give sermons in Polish; to hold additional divine services (attempts were made in certain regions to introduce the Russian language into some of them); to march in any clerical processions outside Catholic church grounds. Catholic priests were forbidden, under pain of a fine, to travel from parish to parish, even for a few hours' visit, without a special police permit.

Such measures only went, of course, to irritate the public and to intensify its fanatical adherence to the church as a representative of national unity. This finally exploded into excesses like the much-talked-about disturbances in Kroty where the common folk – not the landed gentry – rebelled against the authorities, and where force of arms had to be resorted to. It goes without saying that all this policy only stoked up animosity towards Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church and did not produce any results as regards protection from Polonization and merger with Russian statehood.

The persecution of the Polish and Lithuanian languages evoked as much irritation. Obviously, Russian has to be the state language throughout Russia, all business should be transacted and all correspondence done in it; this language should be a compulsory subject in all state and private schools; what's more, in state school it should be language of teaching all subjects except the Gospel and the pupils' native tongue, and also except the lower classes in elementary schools. This is perfectly sufficient for the purposes of state unification. Any other restrictions on the use by the population of its native tongue will only cause irritation and are of no practical use. Nevertheless, the Polish language was expelled, in the Western Region, from all public and private institutions and even from public places: placards saying "No Polish spoken" were hung up at railway station and in post offices. In this case we again aped the Germans and even went further than them, although the German record should have convinced us that it is impossible to suppress the native language. I often spent my summer holidays in Zoppot near Danzig. This is a Germanized locality, and the traces of the local people's Slav origin show only in surnames which often end with "–ski". Nevertheless, despite German school and German culture brought to those parts long ago, the Kashubs, the common folk of Slav origin, still speak the their native tongue which is very close to Polish and which I, a Slav, understood quite well and could communicate with local peasants in.

The government sent to the outlying districts of the Empire men who were not its best, with a low standard of culture and having no understanding of the interests of the local peoples

The employment of office personnel was one of the weaker points of Russian policy in the Western Region. The local-born Poles and Lithuanians were regarded as unreliable. They were restricted to the bottom rungs of the clerical hierarchy, while executive posts were held by Russians or Germans only. This called for drawing people of outstanding ability to the Region with a view to reconciling the local population with such restrictions. This had the opposite result: the isolation of office workers from life, which was a natural result of such a situation, discouraged capable men from seeking jobs in that region. Those who got there used any opportunity to return to Russia. Only those who were not too bright stayed there, and the attempts to form officialdom capable of compelling the local public to respect Russian statehood, at least, failed entirely...

There were brilliant exceptions, of course. Pyotr Stolypin merits special mention in this context. He appeared in the Kovno gubernia as a very young man. His father had bought an estate there. Raised in Russian society, alienated from the local Polish intelligentsia, he could not but come under the influence of the views which predominated in that society. His marriage could only go to consolidate those views because his wife, despite her Moscow origin, was infected with Polonophobia in the extreme. Stolypin himself spoke no Polish of course. The Stolypins socialized only with a few Russian landowners, the Counts Totleben among them. This atmosphere undobtedly had an effect on Stolypin's subsequent activity as Chairman of the Council of Ministers: we largely owe to it the emergence, under his strong pressure, of the Nationalist Party which had almost no following inside Russia and was supported chiefly by the civil servants of the Western region; and it caused the adoption – against the will of the State Duma (Parliament) and the State Council – of the law on Western elective district council with its curias which disjoined individual national and class groups. Pyotr Stolypin's activity in the Kovno gubernia as the marshal of the nobility had another aspect to it which put him in a special position among the Russian dignitaries there. First of all, he was a gentleman in the best sense of the word; and besides, which is, perhaps, more important, he was a hard-working and talented man who applied himself to whatever he did and tried to achieve the best results for the region he worked in. Raised in the Western Region, he loved it, despite his nationalism...

Besides Pyotr Stolypin there were, in the Western Region, other Russians who realized the need of attaching it to Russia by their work for its benefit and who tried to establish closer contacts with the local public. Those were exceptions, however: most Russians comported themselves in a hostile manner and behaved like conquerors. The members of the judiciary were the most cultured of them and always commanded the greatest respect. The Finance Ministry officials were also rather neutral. However, the civil servants who had to do with farming – arbitrators, council heads, land managers – were in militant opposition to local Polish landowners. In the Western Region, the government pursued a land policy entirely different from that in the Russian gubernians. It was considered necessary to lean on the peasant masses, to protect them from the landowners' encroachments and thus to guard them from the latter's influence. In many cases, that could be necessary, indeed. In the class struggle, however, the government should never take sides, it should only be a fair arbitrator strictly following the dictates of the law. If administration by mere injunction is resorted to, the proper limits can be easily overstepped, class animosity excited, and internecine strife provoked. This is what actually happened: far from becoming attached to Russian statehood thanks to the latter upholding their interests, Lithuanian peasants became increasingly convinced that they are free to make any demands and to press for their fulfilment. It also passed unnoticed that peasants began to oust noblemen from the circle of the Catholic clergy – no noblemen are now taking holy orders. These more intellectual peasant priests show special interest in socialist teachings and a special enthusiasm for Lithuanian separatism. They used their influence on their flocks to set them against the landowners and against the government alike.

Hostility towards the latter was stirred up anyway by the agency which had directly to do with both the landowners and the peasants. I mean the police. In the Kovno gubernia their activity can be described not merely as solid bribe-taking, but even as solid extortion. The police officers who took no bribes were looked upon as the eighth wonder of the world, as it were. Every application had to be supplemented with a three – or five-ruble bill, a kind of stamp-duty. Those who took bribes were regarded as honest persons. There were dow-

nright extortionists, too... Pretexts for extortion abounded if a drowned man was found, the neighbours could be given a lot of trouble and asked a lot of awkward questions... There was no end to inventiveness. Shameless haggling over the size of extortions was common practice.

I must say, in justification of policemen, that they were compelled to take bribes by their miserable pay and a high cost of living. But some extortionists put together small fortunes that way and could afford anything – excellent horses, expensive food and drinks. Village doctors were not much worse off. They made hay on pronouncing young men of conscription age unfit for military service... I knew a respectably looking doctor who made tens of thousands of rubles on that.

The policy pursued by the government in the Western Region with a view to assimilating it into the Russian had the opposite result: over fifty years since the last Polish uprising we have only antagonized both the Polish nobility and the Lithuanian peasantry towards ourselves...

In any arguments the government should not take sides but be a fair arbiter strictly within legal limits

There exist two systems of governing conquered lands populated with aliens: the German and the English ones. Both emphasize the superiority of their culture over that of the conquered population. The Germans insist that their culture be adopted in all the spheres of local life. Nothing local is spared, let alone respected, by them. This is the policy of erasing local specific features. The conquered nation is either to turn into Germans or cede place to the Germans. This policy has its merits: it brings elements of German culture – which is, indeed, great – as well as German organization and discipline to the colony. An alien who turns into a German acquires something definite and positive instead of his own nationality and culture. He may complain, but he cannot but admit that he has gained certain advantages, after all.

Nevertheless, this policy is not as successful as the Germans intend it to be; refinement, organization and discipline are all very fine, but aliens also seek to keep their distinctive national features, their language, and their culture, even if its standard is low. Fierce struggle breaks out and also leads to excesses; the conquerors and the conquered never really reconcile with each other. At times, this fire seems to have gone out, but it keeps smouldering under the ashes, ready to flare up any moment...

The other system, which I call English, consists in the conqueror takes the most expedient measures to attract the conquered land's population to his culture not by force but by showing the obvious advantages of that culture. All the national specific features remain and are respected, but English customs and English interests gradually become the aliens' own. The latter keep their self-government. Germany will never achieve such an attachment – it relies on its iron fist only. But as soon as the iron fingers lose their strength, nothing will prevent the prey from breaking loose, and its disentanglement will be the faster the stronger the grip on it seemed.

We Russians have opted for the German system probably for the reason that we are accustomed to imitating the Germans. There was a substantial difference, though. The Germans brought their superior culture to outlying regions; the culture we brought to Poland, for instance, was far from superior. What's more, the men we sent to the outlying regions were by no means our best, because the best had enough to do at home. It was those "second-best" men who were entrusted to work for the Russian cause in the region. Naturally, they thought that their mission was to protect the Russians from aliens, not to introduce Russian culture (which they had no means of doing, anyway). Hence the system of alienation from everything local which, far from attracting the aliens to Russian statehood kept them as if deliberately, at a distance from it: no official posts were available to local residents, the local language was banned from state and public institutions, restrictions were imposed on the Church. It is small wonder, therefore, that the local people keep aloof from the Russians, and the Russians have barricaded themselves from the Poles and Lithuanians. Attaching the outlying regions to Russia is out of the question...

I am convinced that our policy in the Western Region after the 1863 revolt was not only unfair, but irrational and this explains why it has brought negative results. I am sure that if we discarded all fetishism and sent out select figures and instructed them to strictly observe legality; if Russian institutions at their best – such as elective district councils, city self-government bodies, the jury – were set up there on the principles underlying their functioning in our internal gubernias; if we did not distanced ourselves from the local people but drew them into activity for the benefit of their land; if we stopped persecuting local languages and the Church but only demanded a worthy place for the state language and for Russian Orthodoxy; in a word, if we based on policy in that region on the "live and let live" principle, the results would be entirely different.

I am afraid that the views I have voiced here concerning the Russian policy in Lithuania may be interpreted as prejudiced owing to me being related to local Poles which allegedly compels me to see things through the prism of Polish sympathies and antipathies. I am not going to object to that I was guided exclusively by motives of justice and political expediency in Russian rather than in Polish interests. I think, however, that the utter failure of our marginal policy which, in the tragical moment of Russian history led to a situation where the aliens, far from feeling an inalienable part of Russia, sought to break away from it at all costs – this failure has, unfortunately, proved the correctness of my views. ■

A lady Communist versus a sucking-pig

Tatiana Ivanova

Why do people go against plain common sense, against natural human requirements and persist in their delusions contrary to what is only too obvious?

The bus jolted along a bumpy country road. We were packed in like sardines, and it was hot and stuffy like hell. In a word, I was going through the habitual humiliating procedure familiar to most Muscovites who prefer to spend weekends out of town in summer. Breathing and stirring were next to impossible. Up front, right behind the driver's cab, a sucking-pig was squealing. Standing on one foot, I somehow kept thinking about that creature as if there was nothing else to think about. The poor thing, I thought, it is hot, squeezed tightly, but it hasn't the patience to bear the ordeal, and it is protesting. As for the humans, they are silent, no one is complaining. Dostoyevsky was perfectly right in saying that a human being can get used to anything... Indeed, man is the most patient of all the living things. He can be accustomed to anything.

The bus, which had picked us up in a nearby market town, was rolling past villages lost in the fields of a big local collective farm. This year, the bright-yellow fields of winter-cress spreading out as far as the eye could see, with a solitary shabby tractor stuck up somewhere in the middle, made me not sad or annoyed, as they had in the previous years, but downright angry. Look at those weed-grown fields, I said to myself; this much-vaunted collective farm cannot even sow, let alone gather in crops, but it's no use for Muscovites or farmers to ask it for garden plots – the invariable answer is that it has no land to spare... The big collective farm cannot supply enough food even to the nearest market town. Who needs this collective farm? Will there be anything to eat next winter? I couldn't see anything but winter-cress whichever way I looked.

Around the corner another field, an even more lamentable sight than the previous one, came into view. Sunflowers over six feet tall – brownish-black, last year's – crowded it all the way out to the horizon.

The sucking-pig was screaming itself hoarse.

The unreaped sunflower field turned out to border on a large village: the bus stopped and disgorged most of its passengers, and now those who didn't get off subsided into the vacated seats, heaved a sigh of relif and looked around them. The bus ride became a pleasure.

Suddenly a woman's voice came from a single seat by the window. "It's against the rules to carry sucking-pigs in public transport," it said.

The sucking-pig owner, an elderly woman, said with a serene smile: "I can't walk twenty kilometres with it under my arm, can I?"

"You could have flagged down a cab, or asked someone for a lift," the same voice replied firmly. "You have no right to convey it by bus, because bus is a public vehicle."

We all took the lady for a ticket-collector and stood up for the sucking-pig. A meeting ensured. "A cab, indeed, do you think this old woman here can afford a cab fare?" "Leave her alone, will you, she can't very well walk all the way!" "You call this a public vehicle? It's worse than a pigsty! They've got to pay us for using their buses!" "What's the woman supposed to do? Ride in a bus and let her sucking-pig foot it?"

Our "Mrs Grundy" responded to each of these statements with a monotonous: "Sucking-pigs are not allowed into a bus. This is public transport. You can't carry sucking-pigs by public transport." She did not bother to elaborate on her arguments.

Now there was ample elbow space in the bus, wafts of fresh air came in through the open windows, the sucking-pig grunted contentedly after all that crush and seemed to enjoy life. In the meantime people were working themselves up. "It's because of the likes of you that nobody wants to live in the countryside any longer, they shouted. It is the likes of you that have landed us in near-famine! Look at her, do you think she'll ever say no to a good chunk of meat? Not bloody likely! They have taxed people so hard no one keeps cattle any more and now they want to keep our sucking-pigs off the buses!" The passengers shouted at the top of their voices, all at once but "Mrs Grundy" remained imperturbed, unshaken and terse. The sucking-pig owner untied her headscarf, let it slip down to her shoulders and went limp in her seat. She looked defeated: the volley of words, protests and arguments failed to soften up her opponent, to compel her to retreat, to deviate from her general line – even to embarass her, for that matter.

"Stop arguing with her," a young man finally said. "Save your breath, people. Don't you see she is a Communist?

Until then I had raised my voice in defence of the sucking-pig owner without looking back – felt too lazy to crane my neck. Now I did look back. The lady Communist was looking straight ahead of her, unruffled. In the country bus, she stood right out for her hairstyle, her severe brown suit and an unburdensome hand bag in her lap. The Party Congress presidium type.

She did not refute the young man's words. Neither did she confirm them. However, the meeting came to an abrupt end. The sucking-pig owner set her scarf straight and turned away towards a window. All the rest also shifted their gaze to the winter-cress fields outside, to the sky, to the distant forest. The sucking-pig kept grunting.

"Well," an old man seated right behind me said addressing his neighbour, "the Communists are also human beings like you and me, only they've gone nuts... This woman here, she looks neat and nice and got everything in place. Must be married, with kids and all that. But she doesn't know what she's talking about. Got to take pity on her, she can't earn her own living but she wants to live well, too. Fighting a losing battle, one against all..."

The carefully coiffured lady in a severe suit sat silently, like a monument. I did not think about the sucking-pig any longer. What was the use thinking about it – its present and its future were obvious. I thought about the unshakeable Communist. I thought it was high time she humbled her pride and I marvelled at my compatriots' magnanimity. I knew that for just one word of apology the sucking-pig owner would have offered the Communist a mug of milk and said, "Here, drink this and relax, dear, no offense taken. Your kids all right? Take heart, we'll pull through somehow..."

A 12-year-old Swedish boy **Roland Tiensuu** believes that the preservation of our planet in its original form is too serious a task to be left to the adults. When three years ago he learned about the ruthless destruction of rain forests in Latin America he was shocked to find out that when he and his classmates grew up there would be no rain forests left on the Earth. Roland decided to act immediately, while it is possible to save at least something. "I saw a TV program about people planting trees instead of the felled ones. Of course, we couldn't follow their example. Sweden is too far away from Latin America. I thought that we could rather buy that rain forest – said Roland.

With the help of their teacher Roland and his classmates began selling muffins in their native village of Fagervik and soon had enough money to purchase 4 hectares of rain forest in a picturesque spot of Costa-Rica – the Monteverde nature preserve. Four hectares of wood were saved from destruction. The kids' example worked, and now there is a charity organization Children's Rain Forest, in Sweden which unites students from thousands of schools. Members of this orgaanization have already bought 7 thousand hectares of the jungle for 1,5 million dollars. The movement was supported by students from Germany, Japan and the United States. As a sign of gratitude the Costa-Rica Monteverde Conservation League has named part of the jungle Children's Eternal Forest.

In the two years of participation in international tennis tournaments 17-year-olf Yugaslav girl **Monica Seles** has managed to get the record rating and become the youngest "first racket" of the world. She decided to take up tennis seriously after her brother had brought home a cup he won at a tennis tournament. Monica wanted to have one like that too, and at the age of ten she got it, having won first place at the Junior's competition of Yugoslavia. A year later she was the first at the European Juniors' tournament, and a little later at the world Juniors' tournament. Yugoslav sports journalists named her the year's No.1 athlete. In March 1991 she managed to win the tennis crown from Steffi Graf.

However, along with her triumph at the tennis courts, her vacation in Florida and her tour of Australia, Monica had to learn the rules of the grown-ups' games. Although she was second at a recent international tournament in the German city of Hamburg, where the prize fund was rather high, she didn't get a penny. The money owed to her for the tournament was frozen at a special bank account, because Monica had violated the conditions of the 4-million-dollar contract signed by her parents, a German sports company and a marketing agency five years ago. According to the contract Monica was not supposed to live outside German territory. The firms demand a forfeit of 25 per cent of the money earned by Monica in the past five years plus another 369 thousand marks. Monica's former coach also demands more than a million marks from Monica for training her.

* * *

Six years ago **Alexander Dudnichenko** hit his feet against a stone border and was slightly injured. However, wrong treatment ended in the amputation of both feet. Since then Alexander who

Acquitted by the court

The man you see at this photograph is not the founder of an all-winning doctrine, he is 43-year-old **Dmitri Leonov,** the Chairman of the Human rights commission of the inter-republican Memorial organization, the leader of the Hot Spots project and the organizer of and participant in expeditions of observers of the Memorial Human rights center in Baku, Lithuania, Karabakh, South Ossetia, Georgia, Moldova and Armenia – wherever interethnic clashes take place, human rights are violated and blood is shed.

Their scrupulousness and meticulousness in interviewing people, can drive the interviewees nuts, but this cannot be helped - Leonov's people are not looking for sensations, but rather for objective information, which is indespensible in such delicate matters as interethnic conflicts.

Dmitri, who is so absent-minded that he can leave his hat somewhere or catch a wrong bus, is purposeful and concentrated in his work. Rain, shine, blow or snow, day or night, – he will leave home without his hat and galoshes in search of information which has some value in his eyes. But like a good master of a house who does not waste anything, Dmitri Leonov finds all information useful.

In February members of the Memorial organization were slightly alarmed, since Leonov who was supposed to return several days ago from South Osetia, was still absent and sent no word to his comrades. They couldn't get in touch with Tshinvali, which was left without electricity. Some three days later the situation was clarified: Leonov who didn't want to risk the documents gathered in South Ossetia decided to avoid picket lines on the roads and the control points and walked on foot with a guide, over the mountains. This way he thought, he would avoid trouble and save the bag full of most valuable materials.

When Stalin was in power many of his relatives were arrested and destroyed, but Dmitri says that it was not the main reason for his participation in the Memorial organization. A liberally-minded pacifist, he is not religious due to his scientific mind. He received an education of a mathematic and a translator, but has a calling for classical philology, although he usually limits his interests to ancient Greece and describes as his favourite topic, something that he would like to work on forever, a catalogue of ships in Homer's *Iliad*.

Leonov cannot overcome the discomfort he feels due to legal chaos, bloodshed in the country and injustice, and he cannot remain indifferent to every new fact of lawlessness and arbitrary rule. Last time he was arrested on May 7 in Red Square where he had organized a sit-in of protest against the Soviet troops helping one of the sides in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. His charges invoked article 166 (part 2) of the code administrative procedure. To everyone's delight at the court meeting on May 14 Leonov was acquited. He does not remember whether it was the 6th or 7th time he was called to account.

is now 29 has undergone 54 operations.

Dudnichenko headed the invalids' society in his native city of Gorlovka. And then he decided to set up a Fund of protection of the Unfortunate. Dudnichenko who does not trust official organizations and funds, believes that money there "disappears no one knows where and does not reach those it is meant for."

Dudnichenko, who found no support either in Gorlovka, or in Donetsk, or in Kiev, came to Moscow to look for justice. But according to his words the city authorities also turned a deaf ear to his complaints. People from the Health ministry refused to meet him, while journalists displayed no interest in him. And then Dudnichenko went on hunger strike. Thousands of Muscovites saw him in downtown Moscow with posters in protest against the "authorities' indifference to invalids and the unfortunate."

The hunger strike was stopped already the next day – after representatives of the West German Embassy in Moscow promised to help organize the manufacturing of the latest wheel chairs.

If any of our countrymen would like to help the new fund here's the number of the bank account: The Development Bank – XXI century, bank account No. 161816 in GU of the State Bank (Gosbank) of the Russian Federation in Moscow, MFO 201791, for The Fund of Protection of the Unfortunate.

* * *

The President of the Russian-American University, 38-year-old doctor of Historical sciences and former teacher at the Diplomatic Academy, **Alexei Podberyozkin** believes, that his organization has a number of features which helped it survive in the present situation. During the six months of its existence the RAU turned into a scientific-and-research, cultural and educational center which has a certain influence in business and political circles. First of all, this can be explained by its absolute independence – there are no government offices or institutions among its founders. Second, the organization is constantly generating ideas and initiatives. "We don't ask for anything, but rather try to offer something," says Podberyoskin. And third, the University has a rich bank of information on politics, economics and the press. The RAU writes and issues all kinds of reference literature. For instance, pretty soon it will publish a two-volume reference book *Political Parties and Movements in Russia* and a six-volume edition of *Russia's Enterprises*. These will be followed by *Military Armed Formations of the Territory of the USSR* and *Russia's Free Press*, about underground publishers.

The University's publications are much in demand. A program of analysis and forecast of internal conflicts in various regions of the country has been ordered by many republics, including those which are not going to sign the Union agreement, and western businessmen who plan to invest in the Soviet economy.

From now on the University will engage not only in research work. As of September 1 teachers, which like children have to pass a competitive exam, will conduct classes in the first, 9th and 10th grades.

* * *

The man who has quit the strike

The Chairman of the Belorussian Confederation of Labour, 40-year-old leader of Belorussia's strike movement **Mikhail Sobol,** has quit the republic's popular front and the presidium of the republican strike committee.

During 11 years Sobol worked as a building engineer. He was the first in the republic to set up a work collective council at his plant. In an attempt to defend the rights of workers he quarrelled with the plant's administration and was dismissed. In 1989 he formed an ititiative group to organize the workers' movement in the republic, and in September of the same year he headed the organizing committee of Belorussia's Workers' Union. In the spring of 1990 he took part in the preparation of the congress of independent workers' organizations of the country, which ended in the foundation of the Confederation of Labour, and became its co-Chairman.

There were several attempts to call Mikhail Sobol to account for "anti-public activity." In November last year representatives of the strike committees of Minsk factories and activists of the republic's Workers' Union gathered outside the building of the Minsk city council, to support the proposal of the commission on human rights and legality to de-politize factories, organizations and institutions, the bodies of government, the court, the procurator's office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and education. The workers were dispersed by the Special Riot Police and attempts were made to bring them to court for an unsanctioned meeting. Sobol refused to go to court. His house was surrounded by militia for many days.

In the Popular Front Sobol headed the production liaison commission. During the April strike he coordinated the work of the republic's strike committees. He felt very bad about the Minsk strike committee which stopped the strike just when the workers in Orsha had blocked the major railway station thereby predetermining the outcome of the strike.

Mikhail believes that the Belorussian labor movement has made two big mistakes. First, it missed the chance to influence the deputies to the Republic's Supreme Soviet – production leaders, having stopped local strikes. And second, acting on the first day of the session only through their spokesmen, it gave the initiative to Parliament and later had to accept the scenario worked out by the communist deputies, which account for a majority of Belorussian MPs.

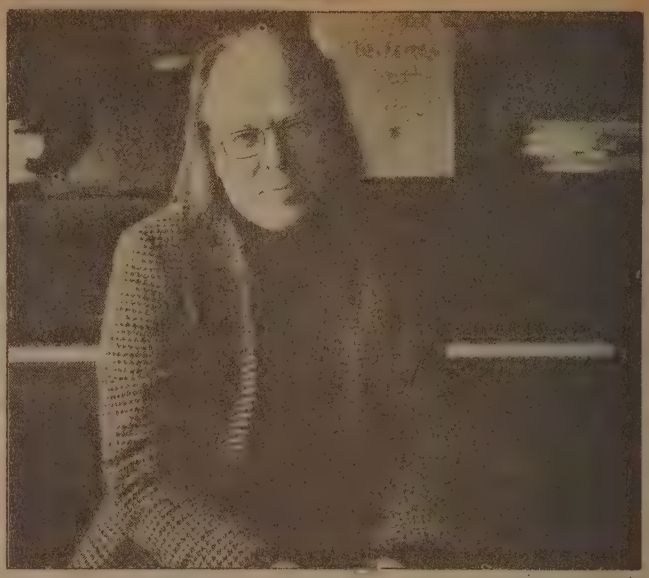
"The spontaneous upsurge in Belorussia came at a time when the communists had already started the future market mechanisms. They set up banks, associations and funds and the union of industrial enterprises. Therefore they can strangle economically those whose political actions are not to their liking. It's an illusion to think that they will be taken aback by mass demonstrations of workers, as was the case in Germany," says Sobol. "Today the structure of the republic's government must be changed only alongside changes in the relations between the owner and the hired worker."

On May 22 a mere 6 thousand replied to the call for resuming the strike in Minsk. Reprisals began against the leaders of the strike movement.

Irina Lagunina
MINSK

The story of a happy man

After his brilliant performance at the Moscow Conservatoire, pianist **Valery AFANASYEV** finally became known to the Soviet Union. Perhaps we shall soon be able to read the translations of his novels written in English and French. Prof. **Leonid Goldin,** doctor of philosophy, talks with Valery Afanasyev



"I do not object to fame. If I do not become famous, I shall simply enjoy writing..."

Leonid Goldin. There are not a few Russian artistes whose emigration abroad made them widely known to their country while the popularity of some of them even increased. You are one of them. Our music lovers learned about you only last year, and only erudites know your novels. Did it hurt you?

Valery Afanasyev. Not in the least. I live excellently and I am very happy. I have a great talent for happiness. Perhaps it is my only talent, but it is most important. Since I am a writer, I have a large library of books in several languages and take pleasure in reading them. It is obvious that I also play music. Wines and furniture are also my hobby. I live in Versailles and enjoy the beauty of Paris and Versailles. I think that Paris is a capital for enjoyment. New York, Munich or Rome stand no comparison with it.

I am happy not at the public expense. My happiness was not bestowed on me by other people. I have devised it myself. It does not depend on external factors, for instance, on the number of concerts and fame.

L.G. Are you indifferent to popularity?

V.A. Yes, the more so that you know what fame means for a pianist today. It meant something in the 1930s to be one of the best pianists of the world. There were really wonderful pianists at the time. Several famous composers can be named now. But there are no performers of a great calibre. So I do not try to become one of the best pianists in the present-day world.

L.G. What is of real value?

V.A. Freedom and independence. I live quite freely, write and play when I like, go for a walk in the forest, read a lot, visit restaurants and collect wines. Such is free life completely independent of the opinion of other people. My happiness does not depend on what is written about me, who writes about me, how many concerts I give, in what halls and with what conductors I play.

L.G. Did you manage to realize your philosophy of happiness in Russia?

My life in Russia was fairly good, and I do not regret that I was born and lived for some time there. It is a peculiar school of life. You acquire energy which must then be used in other places. It is much more difficult to use this energy in the Soviet Union. A creative person needs to have a broader outlook, constant contacts with artistes, even if there are not outstanding individuals among them. One must not read some bad translations at night, but must have an opportunity to read books in the original at any time, go to a shop and buy the books mentioned in another one. I have a good library, but there are few surprises among newly published books. I rarely reveal books which I do not have or which I cannot get without leaving Versailles. In the past, when I learned about some good book, I immediately went to Paris or Brussels and bought it.

It is difficult to go to the Lenin library and in general, one should be able to read books at home, not necessarily one and the same book for ten hours a day. One must be able to leaf through a book, read one book and look into a dozen of otherss and so on. Reading a badly typed and translated manuscript at night in order to pass it on to someone else in the morning is not proper reading.

L.G. Does this mean that the state of book trade and bad translations compelled you to emigrate? I talked with quite a few people who drastically changed their life, but I hear motives of this kind for the first time. Emigration for aesthetic reasons?

V.A. I was sent to give several concerts in Belgium. I asked for political asylum and stayed there. I asked asylum in a rather curious way. I went to the United Nations office and talked for three hours with an American commissioner who did not differ much from Soviet commissars. He asked why I wanted to stay in the West. I told him that I wanted, for instance, to travel freely, visit the Kandinsky exhibition in London or some concert in Paris. How can you leave your country because of this? And then, it is not a political motive. You are not eligible for the status of a political refugee, the American commissioner told me. I became more serious after that. I explained that everything depends on the regime, the Soviet authorities which do not allow me to travel freely. The authorities concerned concluded that this could be regarded as a political motive.

L.G. Specific as your circumstances are, you evidently know about the different destinies of musicians and writers who did not have to explain the political motives of their emigration.

V.A. Yes, many people are emigrating. The emigration of performers is, on the whole, not very important for culture. They are needed, of course. Without them music would not die, perhaps, but in any case it would not live everywhere. It can be said that performers fill endless music into space and time. This is absolutely necessary. At the same time, they do not write the history of the human brain. They simply paint ready pictures in gay colours.

As for writers, painters and composers, they are tremendously important for the country's culture. It is worse if they emigrate. It is indicative that the Soviet Union has many good performers and, with rare exceptions, practically no good writers or poets. Even at the height of Stalinism, our country had Gilels and Richter. In principle, a performer does not need some social context.

L.G. You want to say that the loss of a performer is not a tragedy.

V.A. Yes. I do not think that this is terrible. Let even a whole orchestra emigrate. Indeed, it is difficult to live in the Soviet Union. One can understand these people. And this is not terrible.

L.G. If I understand you correctly, unlike many famous emigrants who remained vehicles of Russian culture abroad, you have integrated into Western civilization. Did it lead to the alienation from the Russian cultural tradition, or do you combine it with Western mentality? Is such convergence possible?

V.A. I did not think about it. I do not think what is Russian and what is Western in me, and let us mix it, or let us forget what is Russian. I did not want to forget anything and did not damn anyone. I love Russian culture very much. I respect Russian literature, music and painting and even find some Soviet films very good.

L.G. Do you regard yourself as a vehicle of Russian culture?

V.A. Frankly speaking, I do not know what it means to be a vehicle of Russian culture. Who is a vehicle of Russian culture? Is Nabokov a vehicle of Russian culturoe or not? Perhaps Voinovich is a greater vehicle of Russian culture than Nabokov, but Nabokov is considerably higher as a writer and perhaps for this reason he carries Russian culture much higher and further than Voinovich. There are no limits. Russian culture is part of the world culture. I do not see a special task of carrying Russian culture somewhere. You simply belong to it.

L.G. Do you mean to say that art and beauty do not have national bounds?

V.A. In principle, it is not important what is Russian and what is not and in what proportions all this is mixed. One must think about beauty, the beauty of what you do and think less where it comes from, who it belongs to, whether it is modern or not, whether it comes from Paris or Tula, and so on.

If I write in Russian, it means I cannot write it in English, and if I write it in English, it means I cannot write it in Russian. In the given case, the language is a necessity. It is connected with the plot of a novel. It is part of the fabric of this novel.

L.G. The problems of integration and interaction of cultures concern not only the intellectual elite. Many people want to know whether we and they are simmilar, whether real mutual understanding and the coincidence of values are possible. I increasingly feel from my modest experience that there is little understanding. Often it is not even a dialogue between people who think and feel differently, but a meeting between deaf-and-dumb people. I am not talking about language problems, especially painful for linguists. Your opinion as a man of letters who writes in Russian, English and French and knows German is especially important in this respect.

V.A. All misunderstandings between people result precisely from the "we and they" approach. Here is an example. "You have here a bourgeois world with its little charms, while we in Russia have before our eyes the eternal beauty of our suffering." Perhaps my irony is in vain. But some people who come to the West seem to live as before in the country of their origin. They have created a micro-climate for themselves. They do not speak French or English, and if they speak, it is better they do not speak at all. They live in a secluded provincial world.

Some people are inclined to metaphysics and others to physical beauty. Both are close to me. I admire a good restaurant and in general, the Beauty of the French style. Some people think it to be a bourgeois approach and say it is necessary to talk about unearthly things. In my opinion, earthly things are also beautiful. A connoisseur of wine is not a bit worse than a mystic.

Some people feel beauty and others do not. The latter, even if they believe in God, talk about angels and archangels and in general they have slight knowledge. On the other hand, people who feel beauty seem to talk about the spiritual all the time, even if they talk about wine. To my mind, beauty is certainly a spiritual notion.

L.G. Unfortunately, your novels are not known in our country. Forgive me for the indelicate question therefore: what are they about and how have they been accepted in the West?

V.A. I have absolutely nothing to boast of in this respect. No prizes have been awarded to me. I have written six novels – two in French and four in English, – but only two have been published for various reasons. First, because I am constantly rewriting them. For instance, my second novel was put out in France and Germany in French and German, though it was written in English. I continued to remake the novel, and it turned out that its French and German versions seem to be incomplete. The final version has not been brought out. It makes me despondent. And then it is difficult to get your novel published now, because the commercial approach prevails.

I do not compare myself with Nabokov, but he also had the same difficulties, because his books did not suit any of the literary categories and were not published in France. But Aldanov, for instance, was very popular in the United States, where Nabokov was not translated and published. There is a problem of literary categories. If your books do not suit a certain category, it is difficult to classify them. If there is no classification, publishers begin to hesitate. Sometimes books are put out by a mere chance. The success of Nabokov's Lolita is a mere chance and, thank God, it happened.

Perhaps I shall also be lucky. I have nothing against fame. If I do not become famous, I shall simply enjoy writing. This is quite enough for me. I would be satisfied with the fame which Samuell Beckett had. However, the fame of some Milan Kundera would never suit me. Fame acquires some sense when you have left the imprint of your brain in the life of mankind. You must feel that your brain penetrates into the atmosphere. It is very interesting. Beckett surely felt. However, this cannot be said about Kundera or Marquez.

"Reforms" are so far only a watchword

UNESCO is living through hard times

This organization has a reputation of an international centre of humanitarian aid, noble ideas and intellectual cooperation. But inside the UNESCO itself not everything is running smoothly. Many countries, first of all big ones – the major contributors – are not at all happy that the organization's perfomance is insufficiently efficient, especially by today's standards and considering its huge potential.

The UNESCO's striving for the optimization of its activity and the restoration the universality that has been lost with the withdrawal of the Unites States, Great Britain and Singapore has led to the situation when for a number of years the word "reforms" have been the key notion in the organization. It has also become the watchword of the new General Director, Mr. F.Mayor of Spain, who was elected to this post four years ago after a 13-year rule of Senegal's M'Bow. Since that time the world political climate has changed for the better with the UNESCO member states for the first time in many years being in the position to forget about their extra-UNESCO contradictions. Yet the complaints remain the same: the "scattering" of the organization's activity and the excess of the administrative and bureaucratic outlays.

One of the UNESCO's main problems is that it tries to do the impossible. Not infrequently it duplicates the work of other UN agencies. For example, the UNESCO is occupied with the environment, although this is the sphere of the activity of the specialized organization, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The UNESCO focuses its attention on human rights and even on investigation of individual complaints, although there exists the Human Rights Commission. The UNESCO deals with the problems of AIDS, narcotics and the liquidation of consequences of nuclear power station accidents, although there function, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The UNESCO has a relatively small budged: about $200 million a year with the lion's share of it going to the keeping of the organization's staff. So, it is not always possible to collect the proper amount of forces and funds to make a substantial contribution to the solution of this or that problem. And it is no coincidence that the organization is having problems with the recognition of its merits: in a number of international documents, for example, in the Final Act of the CSCE Vienna meeting they have "forgotten" to mention UNESCO even in such traditional for it fields as science and technology and ecology, including education in the field of the environment.

Cannot this situation be explained by the fact that today's changes in the UNESCO have affected only the political aspects of its activity and not the substance of its work? The information programme has turned in a mere tool for rendering assisstance to the developing countries and has completely lost its intellectual side.

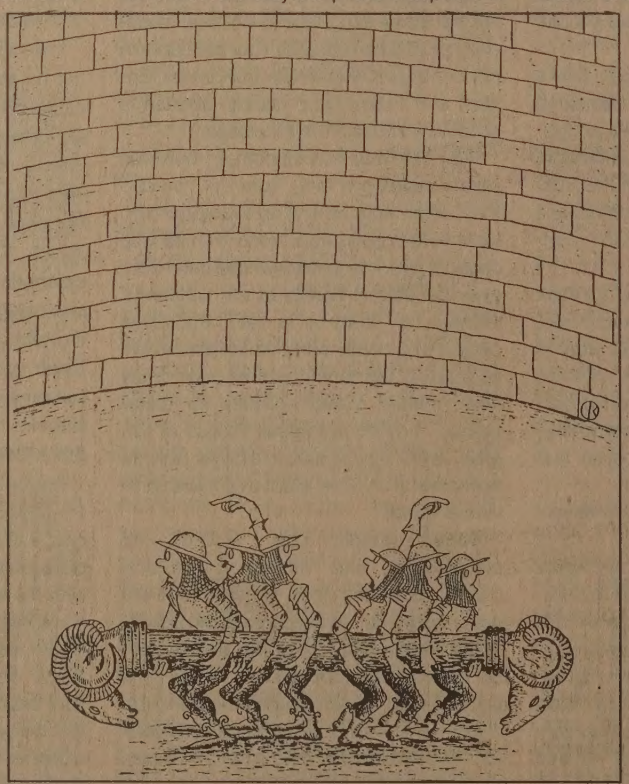
Of course, all this must not call into question the expediency and the usefulness of the UNESCO's existence.

In this country they are also aware of the problems faced by the UNESCO. The republics and the regions of the Soviet Union are becoming involved in the cooperation activity and the direct scientific links are being established between the Central Asian Republics, Kazakhstan, Siberia, the Far East and the UNESCO Bureau in Delhi, Islamabad, Bangkok and Jakarta. Yet, it's a pity that all this does not lead to the introduction of the UNESCO-popularized advanced experience in this country.

According to the results of the survey conducted on the UN request by the All-Union Center for the Study of Public Opinion, the UNESCO has turned out to be the most "popular" in the USSR organization among the UN agencies and organizations. The organizers of scientific, instructive and cultural activities and journalists tend to use the name of the UNESCO to raise the prestige of this or that action. Sometimes people simply begin to invent things claiming that the UNESCO has declared "the year of Alexander Nevsky," "the year of non-standard methods of doctoring" and even "the year of the devil."

Any criticism can be called into question. Many people think that the UNESCO is no less efficient than other organizations of the UN system, and in some respects is doing even a better job. There is some reason in these arguments. For example, even after their withdrawal from the UNESCO, the United States and Great Britain continue to take part through the UNESCO patterns in the oceanographic programmes and the efforts aimed at the preservation of universal heritage. But the mandate from the organization is one thing, and the real practice and the quality of programme deliveries is quite another.

This organization has been called "the crossroads of ideas," "the big brain" and "the conscience of the United Nations." The UNESCO has yet to live up to these words.



Drawing by Vladimir Soldatov

Vladimir Gai,
Deputy Executive Secretary,
the USSR Commission for UNESCO

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